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DOUBLE ISSUE

The Nation.

PRESENT AT THE DISSOLUTION: THE FAILURE OF BUSH'S FOREIGN POLICY
The Editors

PAYMENTS FOR PERLE
Ari Berman

HUNGRY IN AMERICA
Trudy Lieberman

THE HEAT IS ON

As Questions Grow, So Does Bush's Vulnerability

by JOHN NICHOLS

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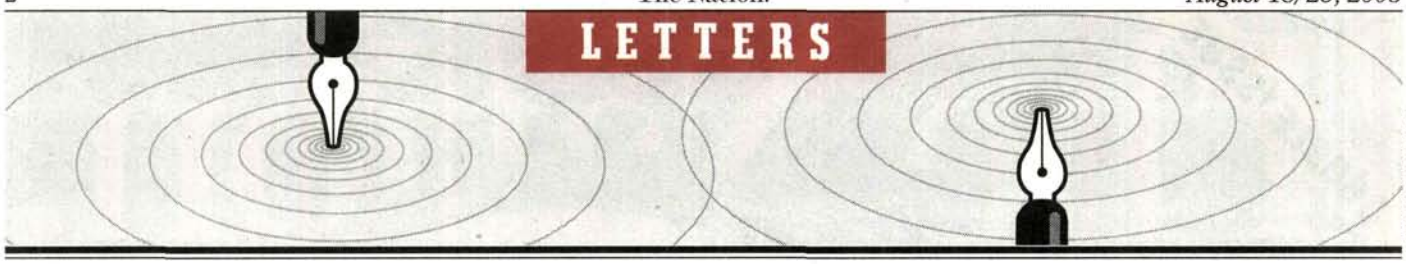

CHRISTOPH NIEMANN

SUPREMES & AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Hayward, Wisc.

■ It is truly sad that in order to acquire some semblance of racial justice and equality the argument must be put forth that diversity on campus is beneficial toward achieving greater corporate efficiency, a more effective military and a broader educational experience for white students [Eric Foner, "Diversity Over Justice," July 14]. Gone, it seems, are the days when appeals could be made to the collective conscience regarding the legacy of oppression and the virtues of kindness and empathy. As Eric Foner writes, "it is a sign of the times." I applaud Justice Ginsburg for taking the position that we should do what is right because it is the right thing to do. DAVID CLICK

SUPREMES & 'SODOMY'

Washington, DC

■ The Supreme Court's decision invalidating the Texas "sodomy" statute [Richard Kim, "Queer Cheer," July 21/28] is an important victory, and I sure don't want to rain on anyone's parade. But this happy news is also a sad reminder that on this as on so many other issues, the United States is decades behind the rest of the developed world. To cite just one example, Canada repealed all laws regulating private consensual sex in 1969. How shameful that it took us a third of a century to catch up. DAVID C. FATHI

LA BELLE BELLA

New York City

■ Patricia Bosworth's profile of my mother, Bella Abzug, in the July 21/28 issue was indeed reflective of her truly amazing and dynamic life as one of the most influential Democratic women and Congresswomen of the twentieth century. However, many in my family and many of my mother's close associates from those years feel compelled to correct an error of fact in this story. Bosworth says, "Bella was often disruptive when she was expected to be deferential. As when she barked 'Fuck you!' to Carl Albert [Speaker of the House] and Hale Boggs [fellow Congressman and friend of my mother's, by the way] after they voted no to her resolution to end the Vietnam War."

My mother would never have used those expletives to Albert, someone whom she greatly respected and liked, and who had been her mentor in her first years in Congress. As the consummate lawyer who greatly understood and respected the process and procedures of Congress, she knew better than to show such disrespect to the most powerful man in the House. Nor would she ever use such curse words toward her fellow Congressmember and very dear friend Hale Boggs. That part of the story is simply not accurate, which I told the *Nation* fact-checker. I also told her that if my mother exhibited any anger at that time to any House personnel, it was toward Fishbait Miller, the steward and doorkeeper of the House. When Miller told my mother to take off her famous wide-brimmed hat upon entering the House, of course she told him that she would not be told when and where to take her hat off. But let the record note that she did in fact comply and take off her hat in the House chamber... But, of course, only on her own terms! LIZ J. ABZUG

BOSWORTH REPLIES

New York City

■ Respect and friendship have nothing to do with the expletives directed at Carl Albert and Hale Boggs, which Bella's assistant at the time, Esther Newberg, heard her say (outside the hallowed halls of Congress). For the record, throughout 1971 Bella fought to get a Stop the War resolution passed in the House. Albert and Boggs never supported her efforts, and she kept trying to convince them how important such a resolution was. They argued a lot—both publicly and privately—as documented in her memoir, *Bella*, which chronicles her first year in Washington. Bella spent years tirelessly opposing the Vietnam War; she played a vital role in igniting debate about the brutal US involvement in that country. PATRICIA BOSWORTH

DID SOMEONE SAY 'INTELLIGENCE'?

Washington, DC

■ Robert Dreyfuss's "More Missing Intelligence" [July 7] completely misstates the function and mode of operation of the Special Plans directorate. It was created in October 2002 (not fall 2001) by expanding the Near East and South Asia Bureau's Northern Gulf section, in order to provide enough manpower to handle policy issues with respect to Iran, Iraq and the global war on terrorism.

Special Plans is a policy planning group and is a consumer, rather than producer, of intelligence. It receives intelligence information via normal US government channels. It is simply wrong to suggest that Special Plans received information from a "secret, rump unit...in the office of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel."

It is regrettable that *The Nation* did not check its facts with the Pentagon before printing this erroneous article. BRYAN G. WHITMAN
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs

Decatur, Ga.

■ Robert Dreyfuss made several salient points about how the Administration dropped the ball in devising a postwar strategy in Iraq. However, he erred in closing with: "A massive failure of US intelligence has led to an emerging disaster in postwar Iraq."

The disaster had little to do with failures in the intelligence community. Bush/Cheney/Rumsfeld drove the events. They had access to the best intelligence in the world. They decided what to discount and what to believe. This failure was one of political leadership, not intelligence-gathering. JEFF BOATRIGHT

DREYFUSS REPLIES

Alexandria, Va.

■ Since fall 2001, the Pentagon has shrouded the intelligence analysis unit in Under Secretary of Defense Douglas Feith's office in octopus ink–like secrecy. That's the unit that, according to many accounts, including my own reporting, was set up to manufacture skewed intelligence reports that could justify the Administration's drive to go to war in Iraq, by linking the former regime in Baghdad to Al Qaeda and to weapons of mass destruction. What the unit did, and why, has remained unclear, and the Defense Department isn't working hard to explain it.

By the same token, the relationship between that intelligence unit and the so-called Office of Special Plans has been kept murky. Perhaps they are the same thing, or perhaps one replaced the other, or perhaps they work side by side under Feith. At one point, Feith claimed that the intelligence unit was disbanded last August—but last October, in an on-the-record briefing, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld referred to the unit in the present tense, specifically acknowledging that it gave him intelligence tidbits that he could use to challenge the CIA's decidedly antiwar views. In early June, at a stealthily called surprise briefing, Feith said that the Office of Special Plans, run by neocon intelligence specialist Abe Shulsky, was created in October—yet the *New York Times* has quoted senior Defense officials as saying that the OSP and the supposedly dissolved intelligence unit had some sort of special relationship. Whitman asserts that the OSP was a "consumer, rather than producer," of intelligence. But Rumsfeld himself said it was designed to sift CIA intelligence to find nuggets he could use to challenge agency conclusions. These apparently included that Iraq had no significant ties to Al Qaeda and that Iraq's weapons of mass destruction were not an imminent threat to the United States.

The role of the intelligence unit, and of the OSP, must be at the very heart of the several inquiries into whether the Bush Administration altered or distorted intelligence about the threat posed by Iraq. And, within that, the "smoking gun" will be the forged documents alleging that Iraq tried to buy uranium in Niger for a nuclear

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EDITORIALS

Present at the Dissolution

Washington has shifted into scandal gear. The Administration offers one explanation after another for the President's discredited claim in the State of the Union address that British intelligence had "learned" Iraq was seeking to buy lightly refined uranium from Niger. Each explanation contradicts the last. None so far is believable. Talk of resignations is in the air. Perhaps it will be George Tenet, who supposedly "threw himself on his sword," as people keep saying, when he publicly took responsibility for the President's mistake. (It turns out that the sword must have been made of rubber, since, two weeks after throwing himself on it, Tenet is still alive and well and in charge of the CIA—a CIA that, furthermore, has partially repudiated Tenet's gesture by disclosing that it had in fact warned the White House that the President's claim was shaky.) Next it was National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice's deputy, Stephen Hadley, who was throwing himself on his sword (rubber or otherwise)—by revealing that he had not passed along the CIA's warning to his boss Rice. Then there was talk that Rice might have to throw herself on her sword, in order to protect the President. Now the President has said he takes "personal responsibility for everything I say, of course," but without confirming that the uranium claim was mistaken or disclosing how it got into his speech.

The scandal—which might be called wargate (you only have to remove two letters from "Watergate"), since the cost of the mistake was a war—rightly preoccupies the capital. Yet the problem is not only the fact that Tenet didn't tell Hadley or that Hadley didn't tell Rice or that Rice didn't tell the President, or any other failure or manipulation of intelligence or even flat-out lie (though all these occurred and are important). For the roots of the debacle lie in the policy—it is sometimes called the "Bush doctrine"—in whose name the Administration propelled the country into war. That policy unfolded in a series of bold speeches and documents in the months after September 11. The first step was to designate the American response to the September attack a "war on terror." By naming "war" (as distinct from police action) as his means, the President put the world on notice that the full, stupendous power of the American military machine would be brought to bear; by naming "terror" (as distinct from the group responsible for the attack, the Al Qaeda network) as the enemy, he signaled that the operations would be global in scope. Next, in his first statement to the joint session of Congress, the President announced that not only "terror" but any regimes that sponsored it would be placed on the list of enemies. Vice President Cheney soon put their number at more than sixty. The first target was the government of Afghanistan, which was duly overthrown.

In the State of the Union speech of 2002, Bush expanded the range of his new doctrine still further. Most important, he incorporated into it the gravest issue that any President of our era has had to face: the danger from nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction. Bush named an "axis of evil" consisting of three countries that allegedly were seeking such weapons: Iraq, Iran and North Korea. Defining nuclear danger as proliferation—both to new states and to terrorist groups—he asserted that the means to stop it was war. "The United States of America," he said, employing the classic language of military ultimatums, "will not permit

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the world's most dangerous regimes to threaten us with the world's most destructive weapons." With these words, the cause of safety in the nuclear age was subsumed by the war on terror.

Four months later, in a major speech at West Point on June 2, 2002, Bush elaborated the means by which his ambitious new policy would be pursued. The policy of "deterrence" and "containment" had prevailed throughout the cold war. But now, he said, "deterrence—the promise of massive retaliation against nations—means nothing against shadowy terrorist networks with no nation or citizens to defend." And "containment is not possible when unbalanced dictators with weapons of mass destruction can deliver those weapons on missiles or secretly provide them to terrorist allies." In this speech, too, the President for the first time made an extraordinary claim: The United States would reserve to itself a global monopoly on effective military power, restricting other nations to nonmilitary activities. In his words, "America has, and intends to keep, military strengths beyond challenge, thereby making the destabilizing arms races of other eras pointless, and limiting rivalries to trade and other pursuits of peace." Throughout history, the choice between war and peace had been open to all nations. Now the United States was claiming war as its exclusive domain and confining other nations to peace.

The elements of the new doctrine were assembled, summed up, elaborated and proclaimed to the world in September 2002, in a White House document called "The National Security Strategy of the United States of America." It stated that America's global military superiority would be able not only to "decisively defeat any adversary" but "dissuade future military competition." The preemptive policy was stated even more boldly. The United States reserved the right to attack "even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy's attack." The proper term for such a policy, as many political scientists have pointed out, is not in fact pre-emptive war (forestalling an attack that is planned and imminent) but preventive war (destroying military forces that might one day be used against you). At the document's core was still the resolve to stop proliferation of weapons of mass destruction—whether to states or to terrorists—by military force.

This is the policy whose unraveling across the board we are now witnessing. Condoleezza Rice likened the post–September 11 moment to the end of the Second World War and the beginning of the cold war. President Truman's Secretary of State Dean Acheson titled his memoir of the period *Present at the Creation*. The Bush doctrine was self-consciously patterned upon it. Now, less than two years later, we are present at the dissolution.

The Bush policy has failed in Iraq. The Iraq war gave life to every one of the main tenets of the Bush doctrine: It was an exercise in the raw, overwhelmingly unilateral use of American military power; its chief justification was stopping the spread of weapons of mass destruction (the Congressional resolution passed last October authorized forcing compliance with UN resolutions, which dealt almost exclusively with the disarmament issue); and it was preventive par excellence. Now the weapons of mass destruction are nowhere to be found. To the arguments that preventive war is illegal (a clear violation of the UN Charter) and strategically reckless (if taken as a model by other states, it is a formula for international anarchy), we must add that it is unusually prone to

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EDITORIALS

catastrophic error. The President's spokesman has commented, "the President is not a fact-checker." But he had better become one if he wishes to pursue a policy of pre-emptive war, whose justifications depend entirely on the accuracy of facts.

Intelligence failures—a serious problem in any war—fatally undercut a pre-emptive war policy. The recent arguments by Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz and others in the Administration that the war was worth it even if the intelligence was "murky" (i.e., wrong) is unlikely to persuade the families, American and Iraqi, of those who died in the war. (As the factual basis of the war justification collapses, the words of the National Security Strategy of the United States make interesting reading: "To support pre-emptive options, we will: build better, more integrated intelligence capabilities to provide timely, accurate information on threats, wherever they may emerge.") Meanwhile, the war itself spins out of control. The plan for global military domination, it has turned out, had no political underpinnings. The Administration knew it had a regime to destroy but apparently forgot that it would then be in possession of a country to govern. In what is the most colossal intelligence failure of them all, the Bush Administration scarcely seems to know what a country is, or what is required to keep one—its electricity, its schools, its local governments, its hospitals, its museums—running.

The policy has failed in North Korea. While attacking a country that had no known, current program for building weapons of mass destruction, the Administration proved helpless to deal with a country that, by its own account, has moved swiftly and brazenly to acquire them. Former Secretary of Defense William Perry has said that he cannot even detect that the Administration *has* a policy toward North Korea. In truth, there was a policy—it was the Bush doctrine of pre-emptive attack announced in statement after statement by the President—but the problem was that it simply had no feasible application to a country that, like North Korea, had a significant conventional force and, allegedly, several nuclear weapons. The United States might drop the policy of deterrence in favor of pre-emption/prevention; but in the event it was itself deterred, leaving it with the absence of policy noted by Perry. It was left in the position—diametrically at odds with its own repeated warnings—of saying that the appearance of a nuclear arsenal in North Korea was "not a crisis." Perry now counsels a belated turn to negotiation, and his proposal is well worth trying, but the likelihood of success is uncertain. North Korea has witnessed regime change in Iraq and shows every sign of believing that a growing nuclear arsenal is its best means of heading off the same fate for itself.

The policy has failed in Iran, also apparently on its way to building nuclear weapons. Like North Korea, Iran has not canceled or shelved but stepped up its nuclear program in response to the war in Iraq. Does the Bush doctrine offer a solution? Unable to govern Iraq, can it add Iran to the list of countries it seeks to rule? American military forces are already stretched to the breaking point by the occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq, and other deployments, and soldiers are simply not available to invade Iran, even if the Administration should wish to undertake such a lunatic project. The high-tech forces so useful for annihilating conventional armies have proved useless for running the countries thus acquired. You can knock down government ministries with precision-guided munitions; you can't pick up garbage with them.

The policy has failed in the world as a whole. It has encouraged the proliferation it was meant to stop, leaving the United States and the world without an effective nonproliferation strategy. It has dishonored the democratic system it was meant to promote. The political disaster in Iraq is writ large in the decline of US reputation and power among the nations of the world, almost all of whom opposed the war and are now perfectly ready to watch on the sidelines as the United States sinks in the Iraq bog. It has estranged America's traditional friends, including its NATO allies. It has created a divide between the United States and Europe. It has demeaned and damaged the UN. It has placed a roadblock in the way of the international cooperation necessary to solve the most important economic and social problems of the twenty-first century: saving the global environment and working to fashion a more just and prosperous global economy.

Wargate must be investigated, and those responsible must be brought to account, but none of this will matter if the policy stays the same. Building an alternative vision will be the work of the political opposition to this Administration—and, we hope, a new administration in 2004—but already the general outlines of one are obvious: The United States needs to choose cooperation over coercion; multilateralism over unilateralism; respect for international opinion over defiance; defense over offense; containment and deterrence over prevention; diplomacy over force; peace over war. Neither the resignation of Tenet nor of Hadley nor of Rice nor of all of them together will check the mounting damage. Not even the replacement of the President will in itself be enough. That, too, important as it is, will be significant only to the extent that it is one more means for changing the fundamental direction of the foreign policy of the United States.

COMMENT

Travels With Izzi

Baghdad

The conquest of this country, in the military equivalent of a hostile takeover, reached its flood tide with the triumphant tour of occupied Iraq by Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, the war's policy theorist, and the (over)killing of Saddam Hussein's two mad sons, Uday and Qusay, by Special Operations forces and units of the 101st Airborne Division. Only when their father himself is killed will the coalition warriors be more exultant. "Among Iraqis," said Sa'ad Al-Izzi, an experienced interpreter who once reluctantly translated American movies for Uday, "that is when you'll see even more grieving and rejoicing."

The Wolfowitz visit, unlike the stakeout in Mosul that gunned and missiled and rocketed the Hussein brothers into eternity, was marked by discretion and stealth. No bugles, no drums, no motorcade, not even a full-scale press conference.

As we traveled around the deserts of his country, more or less going where Wolfowitz went, though a good deal more slowly and to a number of other places as well, Izzi told me how daunting and time-intensive the American task here will be. "We

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COMMENT

are a recent country but an ancient culture," he said, "and we change at the pace of a snail's grandfather." An impatient country ourselves, with what the political scientist Ray Salvatore Jennings calls attention-deficit disorder with respect to foreign affairs, the United States faces the prospect (assuming it can't bring itself to ask the United Nations to take over) of either remaining in Iraq for an indefinite number of years or else admitting failure and returning home, leaving behind a swath of destruction, chaos and anarchy that could make Attila look like Gandhi. Or further else: declaring Mission Accomplished as soon as we vaporize Saddam Hussein, and supporting the re-accession of his own Baath Party (shined up with a new name) as we rush off to the next imperial project.

Izzi, a 29-year-old Baghdadi who has been the man in his family since the age of 10, when his father died of natural causes (a necessary modification in Iraq), might best be called a skeptical optimist. Like my own first journalistic guide, who was also named Izzy, the Iraqi Izzi does not trust the pronouncements of leaders, and he is predisposed against power regardless of who wields it. My earlier Izzy told me that a lot of journalists in Washington knew many things he didn't know, because they lunched with high officials. "The only problem," he said, "is that a lot of what they know isn't true."

In other words, I did not have lunch with Paul Wolfowitz. (I can't imagine what the coalition press office did with my request.) He traveled with a select group of embedded reporters, and they have given detailed descriptions of his visits to mass gravesites of Saddam's victims, where he said, essentially, Never Again, as well as his talks with prominent Iraqis and some American troops, all of whom told him how well things are going.

For the rest of us, the Deputy Defense Secretary was a desert mirage. Unintentionally shadowing his visit to our new colony, I reached Basra, 350 miles south of Baghdad, the day after Wolfowitz visited the British-administered region. A British officer said Wolfowitz was given a rosy report on the local conditions. "Which is all right as long as we remember there's a lengthy road ahead," the officer said. "But I've been very shocked at the way your government does business, the arrogance and ignorance, and beyond all that the bureaucracy. Everything is so ponderously slow and then goes off in a wrong direction. Why, for example, impose a failing American medical system on these poor people out here?"

Was Wolfowitz told this?

"Frankly, no. He was more interested in politics and security, and of course the security here in Basra is quite decent." The officer was not ready to give up on the Americans. "When they do get their act together, I'm sure they'll do things in the big American style."

At the American air base in Kirkuk, 150 miles north of Baghdad, Wolfowitz was embedded with the generals when I arrived. Would there be a briefing afterward? No. Wolfowitz had, however, mingled with a few of the troops, said a sergeant major from Florida, one of those blunt noncoms who take no pains to frame anything diplomatically. "What I know, I don't like the man," the sergeant major told me. "He has no idea what's going on in this country, or we wouldn't be operating the way we are, and he doesn't know what's going on with the troops. The brass here isn't going to tell him, and neither are the scared little enlisteds he meets. They'll say everything's hunky dandy, but the truth is our forces are stretched way too thin in this country. We don't know who's friendly and who's going to take a potshot at us. In that way it's like Vietnam. We also need lighter, more mobile vehicles, not those lunky tanks and Bradleys that make real good targets out of us. That's what I'd like to tell Wolfowitz."

The mirage moved on to Erbil, 250 miles north of Baghdad, Kurdish territory that has been protected from Saddam by Americans since 1991. Wolfowitz had been reassuring to the Kurdish leader Izzi and I spoke to. "Mr. Wolfowitz told me we were allies in war and now we'll be allies in peace, so the Kurds will not be swallowed by a united Iraq," said the business-suited Adnan Mufti, former finance minister of one of the American protectorates in Kurdistan during the 1990s. "He told me the federal system had worked so well in the United States, with each state having its own rights and privileges, that it can work equally well here." If the doctrine of states' rights had continued to work so well, of course, African-Americans would not be electing black sheriffs in Mississippi and Alabama, they wouldn't be voting at all; nor would they have the right to go to the same schools whites attend. Sizing up a man who supported the Americans because they supported him, Izzi said that Adnan Mufti is more Catholic than the Pope.

That evening in Erbil, we watched the televised portion of the meeting between the Deputy Defense Secretary and Kurdish leaders. Wolfowitz was at the end of his journey to a country where the temperatures in many places routinely flirt with 130 degrees Fahrenheit (though in the north it is somewhat cooler). In the morning you can feel you're in a bake oven; by afternoon it has become a blast furnace. The Kurds, used to these conditions and needing to impress their sponsors, wore suits and ties. Wolfowitz was in an open-collared shirt. Because his remarks had to be translated into both Arabic and Kurdish, Wolfowitz was forced to sit and listen to the drone of foreign languages. His features relaxed; he looked heat-wilted, jet-lagged, exhausted and, well, human. Could he possibly have learned in Iraq, as all of us must, that preconceived notions of "the situation on the ground," as Americans from the government, the military and, sadly, the press have all taken to calling reality, are possibly not precisely what he had wanted to believe? "Where this country goes now," Wolfowitz said when it was his turn again, "is entirely up to the Iraqis themselves." This statement, from the man who represents the only true power in Iraq, seemed to signify that he was either ineducable or insincere. In the team of The Righteous Brothers, Paul Wolfowitz wrote the lyrics even though the melody belonged to George Bush. These final sentiments of Wolfowitz in Iraq could be translated into monosyllabic English: As soon as you do what we want you to do we will let you do it.

When the victorious week was capped by the announcement of the deaths of Saddam's sons, Lieut. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez offered no justification for not taking Uday and Qusay Hussein alive. They might have been able to lead US forces to their father, and their capture at the very least would have demonstrated that Americans, unlike the Husseins themselves, do not butcher people—even butchers—who are trapped. But apparently we do. No waiting

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COMMENT

them out, no disabling gas lobbed into the house, no cutting-off-electricity-and-water (which would only have put them in the same position as much of their country) siege. With overwhelming firepower against small arms, the occasion became a miniature of the war itself. The sons were monsters, as their father's regime was monstrous. But at the end they were impotent, helpless, and the order of the day—which no one here doubts came from Washington—was the simple, Conradian, Exterminate the Brutes. And make martyrs out of those who deserve nothing so much as to be forgotten. Dead, of course, the brothers aren't eligible to become bargaining chips for Baathist supporters who could kidnap Americans and propose an exchange.

A young Iraqi journalist, faltering but intense in his English, sat next to me in General Sanchez's packed press conference. Not an empty seat in the house, SRO, a Reuters woman and an AP man even had to stand. Give the people what they want. "Saddam Hussein is the manager of evil in the world, my dear," the Iraqi journalist said to me just before General Sanchez spoke. The young man had spent eighteen months in a Baathist prison, where he was beaten every day. "I have big love for American people. Say me why? Because Americans took Saddam Hussein and made him away. My dear, I hope you stay forever." For a moment I had a Baghdad mirage of finding myself next year in Pyongyang, sitting next to a North Korean who will thank us for ridding him of Kim Jong Il, while the city around him still burns brightly.

"Each day," General Sanchez began, "Iraq is closer to its rightful place in this region and in the community of nations."

After the briefing, Izzi escorted me through a large Sunni district. The previous night, as word spread of the Hussein brothers' deaths, celebratory gunshots were fired in a number of Baghdad neighborhoods. There were flares and fireworks—mostly rifle shots—much of the night. "Not here," Izzi said. "The Sunnis here were Baathist supporters, and they didn't fire a single bullet in this whole section. They hate Americans. They will look for the second coming of Saddam Hussein." Then there are the Shiite extremists, who want only a purified Islamic state.

The gamble: If we wait and work long enough, we could get a Japan or Germany out of this project, and we could also get the Khmer Rouge.

Should we stay or go? That is the question, and it may be the wrong one. "The point is, you're here," Sa'ad Al-Izzi said to me, "and your leadership intends to keep you here. Now what?" The relevant questions may be about behavior: How are we behaving, what is the behavior of Iraqis toward the occupation going to become, will they keep on killing a few of us every week, and what is the likely result of these mutual behaviors?

On his 80th birthday, full of late honor and enough satisfaction to refer to himself as a kosher ham, years after retiring *I.F. Stone's Weekly*, yet still writing essays chastising liars in power, my first Izzy responded to a toast by rising slowly to say, "God forgives. The rest of us ought to make up our minds."

The predicament in Iraq indicates that the policy, strategy and tactics of the United States are designed to produce not conciliation but control, not peace but pacification.

In the forty-eight hours following the deaths of Uday and Qusay Hussein, the flood tide of success receded quickly as five Americans were killed in Iraq, the most in such a short period since President Bush announced the war was over. PETER DAVIS

Peter Davis wrote about Vietnam in our June 9 issue and is currently on assignment in Iraq for The Nation. *His most recent book is* If You Came This Way: A Journey Through the Lives of the Underclass *(John Wiley).*

Payments for Perle

An odd thing happened in February when a European television station approached Richard Perle for an interview. Millions of antiwar protesters had rocked the globe a week prior, and the station badly wanted Perle, as chairman of the influential Defense Policy Board, to articulate the Pentagon's Iraq policy. But Perle, as he continues to do today, demanded a fee. Though startled by the request, the news station violated its strict no-pay policy for interviews and obliged the chairman.

The station's experience was not unique. During and after his chairmanship, Perle used his insider status to demand fees for appearances on a number of foreign broadcasts, which included British, Canadian, Japanese and South Korean television. While paying interviewees is common practice in some countries, a number of media outlets made exceptions for Perle. "We did pay Perle because of his position [in a] prominent advisorship to the Secretary of Defense," says a European correspondent who, like most journalists interviewed, requested anonymity because of network discomfort at publicly discussing payment policies. Fees ranged from under $100 to $900—minor sums to someone like Perle, but federal regulations covering officials in his capacity make no distinctions based on amount.

Nor is this the first assertion of dubious dealings by Perle. In the past few months, *The New Yorker* and the *New York Times* have both raised serious questions about whether Perle has used his government post for private gain.

Perle heatedly denied suggestions of impropriety regarding the broadcast payments. "There is no law, regulation or ethics guideline that would preclude my being compensated for articles, speeches or interviews," he said. "When I agreed to serve on the Defense Policy Board I agreed to its rules and I abide by them. I couldn't care less how many of your left wing friends you can quote, by name or anonymously, in support of standards of conduct that would be far more restrictive than anything in the current rules and regulations."

According to the Pentagon, all thirty members of the Defense Policy Board—which advises the Defense Secretary—though unpaid, are considered "special government employees" (SGE) and are banned from using their public office for private gain. Meetings are confidential, and board members obtain classified intelligence, receive security clearances and file internal financial disclosures that only the Defense Department views.

Several current or past officials with knowledge of the Defense Policy Board raise concerns about Perle's requests for payment. "It's naïve to say [TV stations] weren't more interested in Perle because he was chairman," says Barry Blechman, a Democratic appointee to the board. "If [TV] says we want the chairman

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and from that basis he wanted a fee, it would be prohibited." Blechman also notes that "it would never occur to me to charge for interviews." Harold Brown, another member of the board and former Defense Secretary under President Jimmy Carter, said Perle was "monetizing his reputation." Larry Korb—an assistant secretary of defense under Ronald Reagan and now director of national security studies at the Council on Foreign Relations—labeled Perle's actions "a problem."

Though a sympathizer has described Perle as "not a financial creature," a correspondent says that when he approached Perle's assistant for an interview he was immediately asked, "Do you know there's a fee?"

In some of his past interviews on television, Perle attempted to skirt legal problems by declaring that he was appearing as a fellow of the American Enterprise Institute. Often though, he has discarded that disclaimer. Regardless of how Perle presents himself, journalists say that he is paid because of his working knowledge of Pentagon strategy. "When we break the rules, it's for heavy-hitting individuals like Richard Perle," a Japanese news producer explains.

A typical Perle appearance came on April 4, 2003, on Canadian Television's morning news show, *Canada AM*, for which—according to a CTV news producer—Perle was paid $900. The host introduced Perle as a lead architect of Iraq policy and "one of the closest advisers of Donald Rumsfeld and a member of the influential Defense Policy Board." In the interview, Perle described the war in Iraq as certain to be "a quick war by any standards" and asserted that "we will find weapons of mass destruction when the people who know where they are are free to talk to us." On May 29 he was invited back and was paid for discussing Bush's Middle East policy.

Not all international media seemed comfortable with Perle's juggling act. "Nobody would pay a member of the Defense Policy Board for an interview [in Germany]," says Jan-Cristoph Wiechmann, a correspondent for the German magazine *Stern*. "It would, in fact, be considered a scandal."

Federal laws place restrictions on the behavior of SGEs like Perle. Regulations Code 5 CFR 2635.702—barring the use of public office for private gain—also warns of the "appearance of government sanction," and cautions against using public standing "in a manner that could be reasonably construed to imply that his agency or the Government sanctions or endorses his personal activities." Section 5 CFR 2635.807 bans SGEs from receiving money for speaking on matters in which the SGE "has participated or is participating personally and substantially" for the government. "Experts have to make a livelihood," a government ethics specialist explained, "but they're prohibited...if there's a nexus between public and private."

Perle's high-profile articulation of Administration strategy blurs this line. Before the Iraq war, members of the Defense Policy Board acted as unofficial spokesmen for the Pentagon, with Perle charging networks while aggressively promoting the DOD stance. "It's misleading to be charging money [for] selling policy," says Bill Allison of the Center for Public Integrity. "It creates the problem of asking to profit off of your government connection."

Said Perle: "The suggestion that being paid for work I do is somehow an abuse of my role as a member of a government advisory board is the sort of slander I expect from *The Nation* which, since the collapse of regard for the vision of its founders, and the paucity of ideas to replace it, has been reduced to impugning the character of those whose ideas have prevailed over yours."

Financial controversies are familiar to Perle. In early March in *The New Yorker*, Seymour Hersh exposed how one of his holdings, Trireme Partners, sought to benefit from an Iraq war. A week later, the *Times* reported that Global Crossing hired Perle to help win Pentagon approval for the telecom company's sale. Subsequently, Representative John Conyers, ranking Democrat on the House Judiciary Committee, requested that the DOD's Inspector General investigate Perle's conduct. On March 27 Perle resigned his chairmanship of the board, but he remains a member. The DOD, responding to Conyers's letter, initiated an investigation, promising its findings by July 11. So far, Conyers has heard nothing. "These new revelations about Richard Perle are shocking but not surprising," Conyers told *The Nation*. "From his involvement with Global Crossing to this new information about speaking fees, Perle has only fueled speculation that he may be using his government position for private financial gain." ARI BERMAN

Ari Berman, who freelances for Editor & Publisher, *is a student at the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University.*

Victory at McDonald's

Since McDonald's is a global icon of cultural imperialism and the target for numerous other social complaints, it's a little awkward to celebrate the world's largest fast-food corporation for a progressive political breakthrough. Nevertheless, McDonald's has taken on what American politics lacks the nerve to confront: the dangerous practices of agribusiness in producing chicken, beef and pork—that is, the food McDonald's sells to families. The company formally acknowledged in late June that the heavy use of growth-stimulating antibiotics by the meat industry threatens human health. It advised its poultry suppliers to phase out the practice or face the prospect of losing the business of America's largest buyer of meat products. The warning is less firm for hogs and cattle, but those suppliers know they are on notice too. Mickey D is listening to his customers. "We would love to be a catalyst for change industrywide," McDonald's director for social responsibility affirmed.

Let's hear it also for the galaxy of civic-action groups, from the Union of Concerned Scientists to Environmental Defense, from the Humane Society to the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, who made this happen. A coalition of thirteen organizations put aside cultural and political differences to educate the McDonald's management. Some, like the Sierra Club, delivered the message by direct action, picketing Golden Arches outlets with signs like GET FOOD OFF DRUGS. Others, like Environmental Defense, pursued a lawyerly inside track, negotiating in "partnership" with the company's proclaimed commitment to social responsibility.

The victory at McDonald's is but one small piece in a much larger subject—the politics of food—but it demonstrates that peo-

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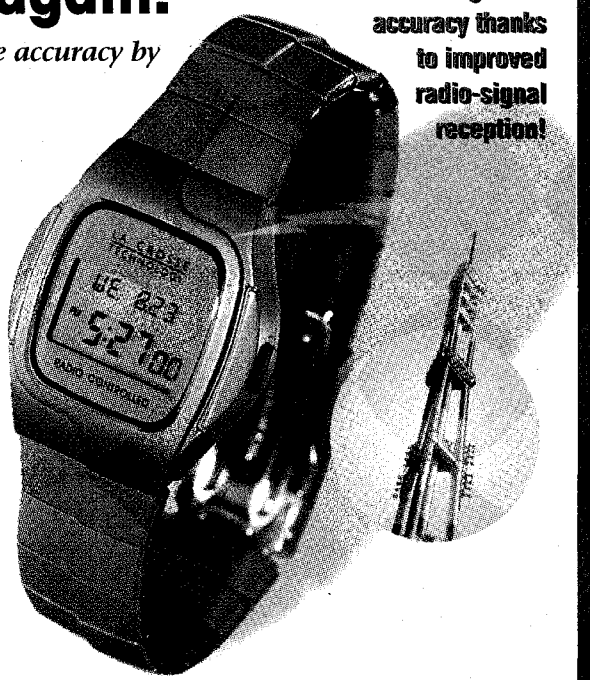

The world has become a smaller place in the past few decades. Transactions take place across the world in an instant. Having a timepiece that can not only keep perfectly accurate time, but also keep track of the time zones can be really helpful and convenient. Now there is a watch that scientifically gives the right time in all zones within a 2,000 mile range of the F-1 Fountain Atomic Clock.

If you travel this watch is a necessity. The Atomic Digital Watch from LaCrosse Technology is radio-controlled, maintaining its incredible accuracy by automatically tuning into the official standard frequency and time transmitter in North America. This WWVB radio signal gets its time from the most precise clock in North America based in Colorado, and transmits its signal over a 2000-mile range. The Atomic Digital Watch gives you a selection of 24 time zones, from GMT+12h to GMT-12h with special U.S. time zones displayed with three characters (ATL, EST, CST, MST, PST, ALA, and HAW). This ultra-accurate radio-controlled timepiece has a perpetual day and date calendar, signal reception indicator and is powered by a 3-volt lithium battery expected to last up to three years.

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COMMENT

ple are not powerless against corporate behemoths, even the market leaders, if they find the right points of leverage. In an era when politics is paralyzed, unable or unwilling to advance government regulation of food and agriculture, some Americans have figured out how to achieve the next best thing—consumer power that changes industry behavior, not by one purchase at a time but on a grand scale by targeting large brands in the middleman position. We'll see a lot more of this consumer jujitsu, because it works.

Michael Khoo, a campaign leader at the Union of Concerned Scientists, explains: "It's definitely not perfect and it's an unfortunate substitute for law, but people do have the power to change things. In a sense, McDonald's is playing the role of what would be the USDA inspectors. If there's going to be a choice, I would definitely rather have the government do it, but right now we don't have a choice."

The antibiotics problem is widely understood though not yet candidly addressed by industry scientists or the federal government. Their egregious overuse encourages the development of resistant strains of bacteria that then may migrate into the environment at large, including perhaps human bodies. The supposed efficiency of corporatized agriculture is riddled with many such contradictions—the company cuts costs and boosts profits by growing the chickens or hogs faster, often in brutal conditions, then somebody else (usually the taxpayers) pays to fight newly created strains of disease. Given market competition, each company typically claims it has no choice but to adopt the various practices of so-called efficiency that also produce collateral damage to society, health and the environment. Then they hear from their customers—not just scattered objections now and then, but in concerted, coordinated, well-informed waves.

Yes, it definitely helped that the long-running record of McDonald's sales growth has stalled. When you're losing customers or not gaining enough new ones, it does focus the company's mind on what might be wrong with the product. Nike underwent a similar conversion experience on the issue of sweatshops when its market share began to decline. Who knows why this happened, but Nike couldn't ignore the possibility that all those crazy kids campaigning against foul labor practices in Asian or Mexican sweatshops might have something to do with falling sales.

In other words, winning reform is not a sentimental question about whether the CEO has a conscience. The mechanism for change is market power, something even a retrograde executive like Nike's Phil Knight has come to appreciate. Nike, like McDonald's, naturally has a long way to go, but it does now respond to those activists from United Students Against Sweatshops, exposing factory conditions of the Nike contractors who actually make the shoes.

"Buy green" activism has been around for decades, of course, but with exceedingly modest impact on industrial practices. What has changed is an essential strategic insight. In the nature of American capitalism, consumers are in a weak position and have very little actual leverage over the content of what they buy or how it is produced (aside perhaps from feeling personally guilty about destructive consequences). Instead of browbeating individual consumers, new reform campaigns focus on the structure of industry itself and attempt to leverage entire sectors. The activists identify and target the larger corporate "consumers" who buy an industrial sector's output and sell it at retail under popular brand names. They can't stand the heat so easily, since they regularly proclaim that the customer is king. When one of these big names folds to consumer pressure, it sends a tremor through the supplier base, much as McDonald's has.

Rainforest Action Network was one of the pioneers in this approach. It organized actions around Kinko's, Home Depot and other big purchasers of paper and wood products. When hundreds of those middleman companies adopted RAN's policy objectives

(Continued on Page 36)

CALVIN TRILLIN

'Sixteen Little Words'

(From the new musical by George Bush & Karl Rove, The Buck Stops There.*)*

First Tenet said, "The fault is mine.
I should have looked at every line."
Then someone at the NSC
Said, "No, George. Please. Not you. It's me."

It's everybody's fault except the boss's.
They're coming forth to take the blame in hordes.
They all say they're the one the albatross is.
There's clanging as they fall upon their swords.

Now Bush's aides are all contrite.
A queue is forming (on the right)—
All volunteers to claim that text.
A White House steward may be next.

It's everybody's fault except the boss's.
They're coming forth to take the blame in hordes.
They all say they're the one the albatross is.
There's clanging as they fall upon their swords.

The words that were the most persuasive
In turning citizens invasive
Had been exposed as bunk before.
But in a speech that pressed for war,
Those words described a looming threat.
So all the vetters failed to vet.

It's everybody's fault except the boss's.
They're coming forth to take the blame in hordes.
They all say they're the one the albatross is.
There's clanging as they fall upon their swords.

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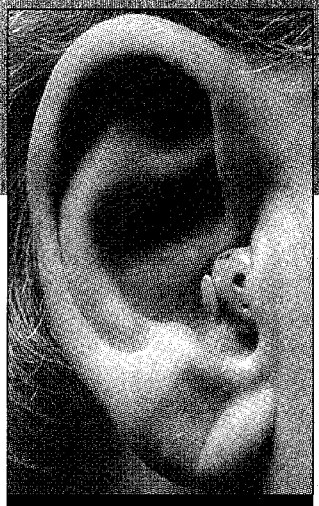

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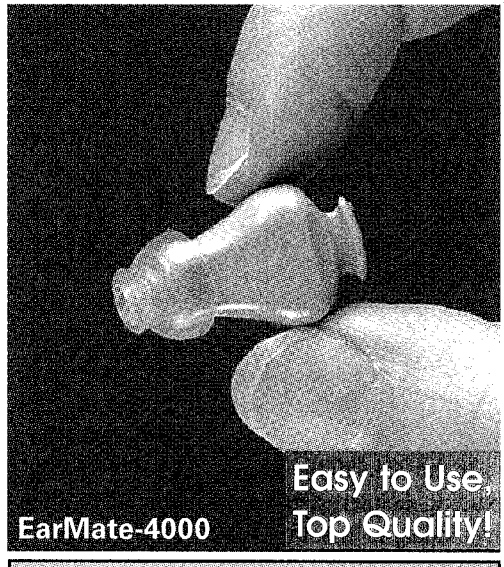

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ALEXANDER COCKBURN

Meet the Prime WMD Fabricator

Week after week Bush and his people have been getting pounded by newly emboldened Democrats and liberal pundits for having exaggerated the threat posed by Saddam Hussein and his still-elusive weapons of mass destruction. One day CIA Director George Tenet is hung out to dry; the next it's the turn of Paul Wolfowitz's platoon of mad Straussians. The other side of the Atlantic, the same sort of thing has been happening to Tony Blair.

They deserve the pounding, but if we're to be fair there's an even more deserving target, a man of impeccable liberal credentials, well respected in the sort of confabs attended by New Labour and espousers of the Third Way. I give you Rolf Ekeus, former Swedish ambassador to the United States and, before that, the executive chairman of the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) on Iraq from 1991 to 1997. These days he's chairman of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, a noted dovecote of the olive-branch set.

In the wake of the first Iraq war it was UNSCOM chief Ekeus, exuding disinterested integrity as only a Swede can, who insisted that Saddam Hussein was surely pressing forward with the manufacture of weapons of mass destruction. It was Ekeus who played a pivotal role in justifying the continued imposition of sanctions, on the grounds that these sanctions were essential as a means of applying pressure on the tyrant in Baghdad.

In 1996 Ramsey Clark, former US Attorney General and a leading critic of the indiscriminate cruelty of these sanctions, wrote an open letter to Ekeus beginning thus: "Dear Mr. Ekeus, How many children are you willing to let die while you search for 'items' you 'are convinced still exist in' Iraq?... Every two months for the past half year, and on earlier occasions, you or your office have made some statement several weeks before the Security Council considers sanctions against Iraq which you know will be used to cause their continuation.... This cruel and endless hoax of new disclosures every two months must stop. The direct consequence of your statements which are used to justify continuation of the sanctions against Iraq is the deaths of hundreds of thousands of innocent and helpless infants, children and elderly and chronically ill human beings."

Despite many such furious denunciations, till the day Ekeus handed over his job as UNSCOM chief to the more obviously suspect and disheveled Australian Richard Butler, Ekeus continued in the manner stigmatized by Clark and others. US ambassador to the UN Madeleine Albright notoriously said to Lesley Stahl of CBS, of the lethal sanctions that killed half a million Iraqi children, "We think the price is worth it," but Ekeus was the one who furnished the UN's diplomatic cover for that repulsive calculus.

It's fortunate for Ekeus's reputation among the genteel liberal crowd that public awareness of what he really knew about Saddam's chemical, biological and nuclear weapons is still slight. In fact, Ekeus was perfectly well aware from the mid-1990s on that Saddam Hussein had no such weapons of mass destruction. They had all been destroyed after the first Gulf War.

Ekeus learned this on the night of August 22, 1995, in Amman, from the lips of Gen. Hussein Kamel, who had just defected from Iraq, along with some of his senior military aides. Kamel was Saddam's son-in-law and had been in overall charge of all programs for chemical, biological and nuclear weapons and delivery systems.

That night, in three hours of detailed questioning from Ekeus and two technical experts, Kamel was categorical. The UN inspection teams had done a good job. When Saddam was finally persuaded that failure to dispose of the relevant weapons systems would have very serious consequences, he issued the order and Kamel carried it out. As he told Ekeus that night, "All weapons—biological, chemical, missile, nuclear were destroyed." (The UNSCOM record of the session can be viewed at www.fair.org/press-releases/kamel.pdf.) In similar debriefings that August, Kamel said the same thing to teams from the CIA and MI6. His military aides provided a wealth of corroborative details. The following year Kamel was lured back to Iraq and at once executed.

Did Ekeus immediately proclaim victory and suggest that sanctions could be abated? As we have seen, he did not. In fact, he urged that they be intensified. The years rolled by, and Iraqi children by the thousand wasted and died. The war party thumped the drum over Saddam's WMDs, and Kamel's debriefings stayed under lock and key. Finally, John Barry of *Newsweek* unearthed details of those sessions in Amman, and on March 3 of this year *Newsweek* ran his story, though not with the play it deserved. I gather that when Barry confronted Ekeus with details of the suppressed briefing, Ekeus was stricken. Barry's sensational disclosure was mostly ignored.

And Ekeus's rationale for suppressing the disclosures of Kamel and his aides? He claims that the plan was to bluff Saddam and his scientists into further disclosures. Try to figure that out.

For playing the game the way the United States desired it to be played, Ekeus got his rewards: a pleasing welcome in Washington when he arrived there as Swedish ambassador, respectful audiences on the world's diplomatic circuits. To this day he zealously burnishes his "credibility" with long, tendentious articles arguing that Bush and Blair had it right. He betrays no sign of being troubled by his horrible role. He will never be forced to squirm in hearings by Democratic senators suddenly as brave as lions. He won't have to wade through raw sewage to enter the main hospital in Baghdad and watch children die or ride in a Humvee and wait for someone to drop a hand grenade off a bridge and blow his head off.

Today he grazes peacefully in the tranquil pastures of the Stockholm Peace Research Institute. But if we're going to heap recriminations on Bush and Blair and the propagandists who fashioned their lies, don't forget Ekeus. He played a worse role than most of them, under the blue flag of the UN. ■

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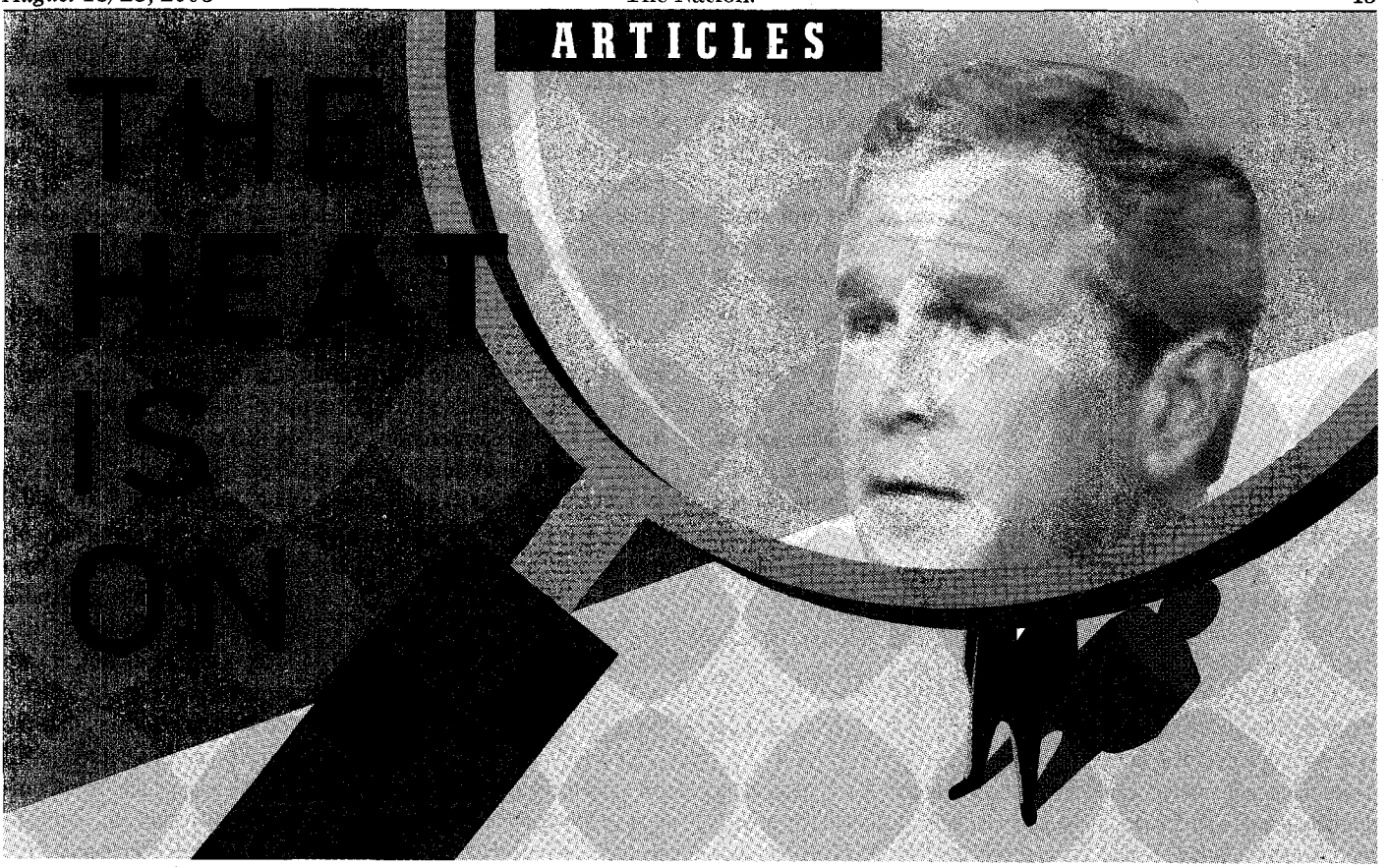
ARTICLES



As Questions Grow, So Does Bush's Vulnerability

by JOHN NICHOLS

Washington hath no fury like a Henry Waxman scorned. On March 17, as President Bush made final preparations to order the invasion of Iraq, the veteran Democratic Congressman from California asked the White House to explain how forged evidence claiming Iraq had sought nuclear material from Niger featured in the State of the Union address. Waxman had supported the October 2002 resolution authorizing Bush to use force against Iraq. But with the revelation that the CIA did not believe to be credible the intelligence Bush had used, Waxman says, "I wanted an explanation."

Waxman got no answer from the White House—nor much attention from the docile media or his Congressional colleagues. But he persisted, dispatching letters to the President and National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, raising the issue in hearings and floor speeches, and finally, in late June, convincing more than twenty House Democrats who had also supported the war resolution to co-sponsor legislation to establish an independent, nonpartisan commission to investigate "an inexcusable breakdown in our intelligence system prior to the Iraq war."

Even that action rated little notice. But barely ten days later, reporters and members of Congress were asking whether the President had employed deceit to lure the country into an unwarranted "pre-emptive" war. It was more than just mounting death tolls, troubling calls for more troops and questions about whether weapons of mass destruction would ever be found that inspired previously silent sections of the Washington establishment to follow Waxman's lead. Simmering frustrations within the intelligence community boiled over into open complaints—and back-channel leaks—that suggested the Administration had inflated intelligence to identify threats that may never have existed. Meanwhile, pollsters saw the number of Americans who were pleased with Bush's management of the conflict dip below 50 percent for the first time since the fighting began, with growing numbers wondering whether the threat posed by Iraq had ever been as serious as Bush claimed.

How far this questioning will take journalists, elected officials and the American people remains to be seen. Karl Rove's White House political machine is hoping a tepid acknowledgment by Bush of "personal responsibility" for his speech and the emptying of Washington for August's Congressional recess will deflate the discussion. But if members of Congress get an earful from constituents and the media stay on the story, Rove could be in for a hot month. "If members of Congress hear in August that the people want a real investigation, I think we'll have it," Waxman says. Representative Jan Schakowsky noted, "The White House says this is just an inside-the-Beltway issue, but I think that when members go home they are going to find that it is a big issue across America."

The shift in the debate came in time-honored Washington fashion: when someone on the inside started talking. With a July 6 *New York Times* op-ed column and an appearance that day on NBC's *Meet the Press*, in which he detailed how his investigation had exposed the Niger uranium claims as false almost a year before Bush repeated them in the State of the Union address, retired diplomat Joseph Wilson broke the dam Waxman and others had pounded on for months. Not even a fall-on-his-sword performance by Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet was enough to halt the questioning. As more members of the intelli-

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gence and diplomatic communities stepped forward to express outrage, former CIA Director John Deutch explained, "If, however, no weapons of mass destruction or only a residual capacity [is] found, the principal justification enunciated by the US government for launching this war will have proven not to be credible."

Washington insiders marveled at how one retired diplomat's discussion of sixteen words in a five-month-old speech had worn the Teflon off Bush's presidency. "I'm not sure they've totally gotten their act together," former Arkansas Representative John Paul Hammerschmidt, a member of the Republican National Committee, said as the Administration's spin machine sputtered. Detailing the negative press the White House received on a single day, *Washington Post* political writer David Broder, the Miss Manners of official Washington, declared July 10 "Black Thursday for Bush" and wrote of "the shadow that now hangs over Bush's bright hopes for a second term."

Readers who flipped through Broder's newspaper could see one media outlet abandon cheerleading for reporting; the *Post*, which followed the Administration's script slavishly before the war, actually committed several acts of journalism aggressive enough to recall the paper's approach to another presidential scandal, Watergate. And it doesn't stop with the *Post*. New White House press secretary Scott McClellan must have wondered whether he had replaced Ari Fleischer or Nixon's Ron Ziegler on the day he took nine questions in a single briefing about the State of the Union fiasco and presidential credibility. Ironically, one of the first serious suggestions that Bush's mishandling of intelligence, if deliberate, could be an impeachable offense came from former Nixon aide John Dean. Recalling in his column for *FindLaw* that some of the most serious charges against Nixon involved misuse of the CIA and the FBI, Dean argued, "[If] Bush has taken Congress and the nation into war based on bogus information, he is cooked. Manipulation or deliberate misuse of national security intelligence data, if proven, could be a 'high crime' under the Constitution's impeachment clause."

'There is a cloud hanging over their credibility, their word.'
—GOP Senator Chuck Hagel

Pollsters quickly quantified the decline in the President's fortunes. Between late June and mid-July, Bush's approval rating fell nine points in *Washington Post*/ABC News polling. By July 20 a *Time*/CNN poll found his approval rating dipping to 55 percent, where it stood before September 11, 2001. His unfavorable rating, now 42 percent in pollster John Zogby's latest survey, is the highest since he assumed the presidency. Of course, broader worries about US troop casualties in Iraq, as well as domestic economic concerns, figure into the numbers. But it is worth noting Zogby's finding that in June Americans favored Bush's re-election by a 49–38 margin but by July opposed it by a 47–46 margin.

As Bush's poll numbers dropped, so too did the level of Congressional deference to the White House. Perhaps reflecting this, on the eve of the recess House GOP members broke with the Administration on issues including media ownership, drug imports and elements of the Patriot Act. "You could hear the language shifting in the institution," said Wisconsin Democrat Tammy Baldwin. Democratic presidential candidates who'd supported the war, like Senator John Kerry and former House minority leader Dick Gephardt, joined antiwar candidates like former Vermont Governor Howard Dean and Congressional Progressive Caucus co-chair Dennis Kucinich in asking whether Bush lied America into war. California Democrat Jane Harman, a solid backer of the invasion who is the ranking minority member of the House Intelligence Committee, asked, "Did the President's advisers pressure intelligence analysts to overstate the 'grave and growing' danger from Saddam's WMDs?... Were we misled?"

Harman's comments were significant, as she works closely with the Republicans who control both the House and Senate. No investigation of White House manipulation of intelligence will go forward without some GOP support. Already, independent-minded Republican senators like Alabama's Richard Shelby and Nebraska's Chuck Hagel have gone off-message. "There is a cloud hanging over their credibility, their word," Hagel said of the Administration. "They need to get that dealt with, taken care of, removed." *Über*hawk John McCain says it's time to "find out who is responsible for [the false claims] and fire them."

But Hagel and McCain are frequent burrs under Bush's saddle. The reality is that the Republicans best suited to fill the statesman role—for instance, Senate Foreign Relations Committee chair Richard Lugar, whose discomfort with the Administration's poor planning for the war is no secret; Representative Jim Leach, a House International Relations Committee member with close ties to the diplomatic community; and Representative Christopher Shays, a member of the same House Committee on Government Reform as Waxman—have thus far avoided joining Democratic calls for an independent investigation.

Guarding against breaks in the GOP stonewall, the White House has distributed "talking points" to Republican members of Congress outlining how they should defend the President. Senate Armed Services Committee chair John Warner of Virginia claims he did not buckle to pressure when he backed off a promise to hold public hearings regarding "hyped" intelligence, but Capitol Hill aides say Vice President Dick Cheney ordered Republican senators to shut down any serious investigation. And there is no question on the Hill that carefully choreographed House and Senate Intelligence Committee hearings in July were designed to control the State of the Union speech scandal rather than to answer questions about manipulated intelligence. It is an indication of the reluctance of even moderate Republicans to cross the politically vindictive Bush Administration that when Democratic Senator Jon Corzine tried to amend a defense appropriations bill to create a nonpartisan commission to investigate the use of intelligence in the preparations for war, all fifty-one Republican senators opposed it. And Waxman's House bill—the most broadly supported of several calls for an investigation—still lacks a Republican co-sponsor. Like Waxman, Corzine says he expects that Republicans will hold the line unless another shoe drops—or unless public pressure becomes overwhelming.

That pressure should mount in August, as members of Congress head home for a month of political fence-mending and grassroots tending. Hometown newspapers are already asking tough questions. "The American people deserve a full accounting

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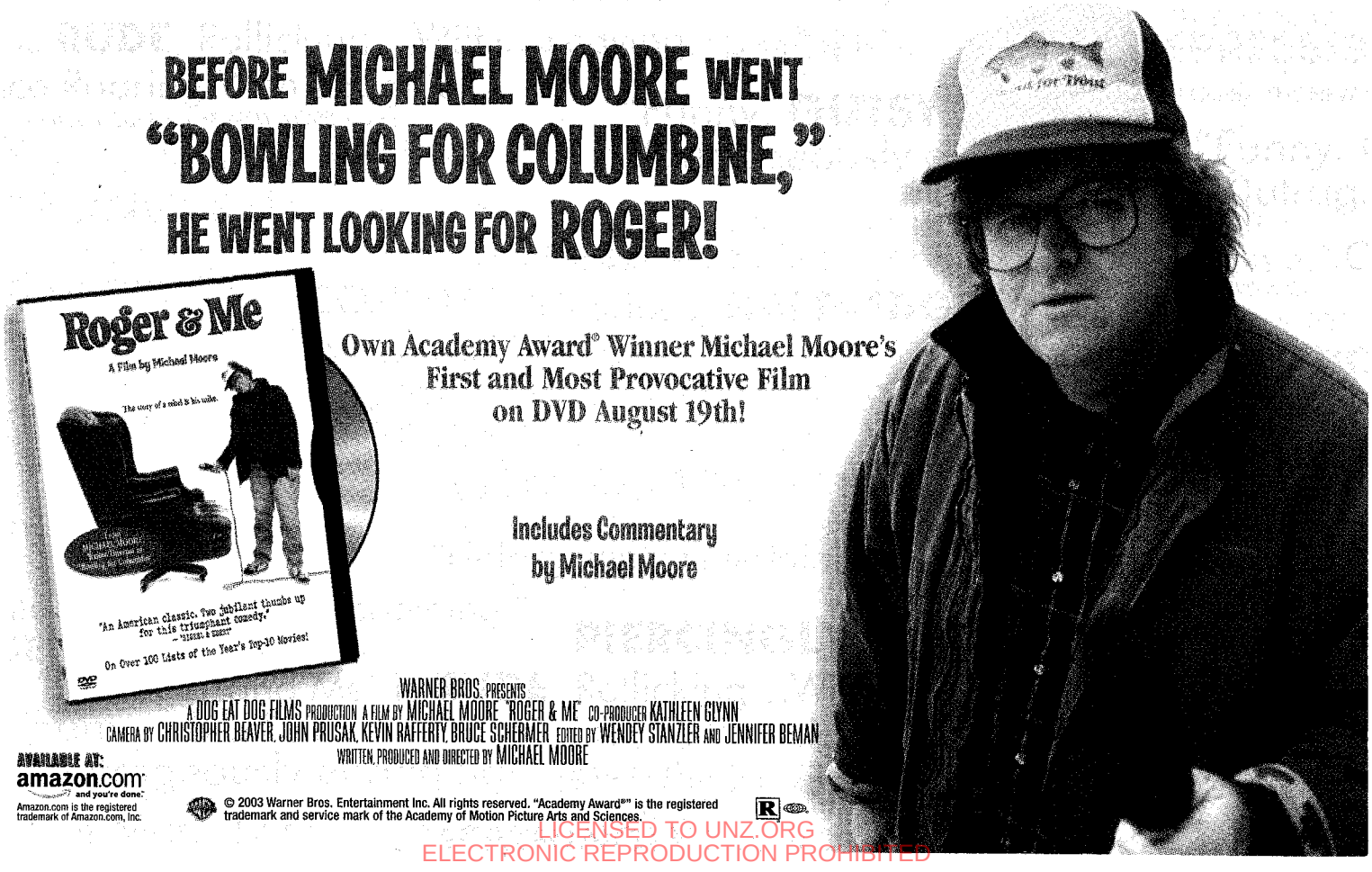
of the evidence. Were mistaken assertions based on faulty intelligence or was there a deliberate effort to trump up evidence to make the case for war?" asks the conservative *Chicago Tribune*, while western New Hampshire's *Valley News* declares, "The American public needs, and has a right, to know whether Bush cooked the intelligence data." If those comments are echoed at county fairs and cookouts where Americans get face time with their representatives, Baldwin says, the Republican reluctance to challenge Bush could dissipate by September. "I think there are Republicans who are waiting to see how deeply the concerns about the war and the President's statements are penetrating," she says. "If members hear about this from constituents at home, and I think they will, they won't be so easily influenced by pressure from the Administration to shut an investigation down."

Democratic presidential candidates, all of whom now incorporate questions about Bush's credibility into stump speeches, will keep the issues alive. But the summer's most significant political initiative could be MoveOn.org's "Misleader" campaign. The network of more than 2 million online activists is targeting at least seventy Congressional districts, where it plans to use town meetings, petitions and ads to pressure Democratic and moderate Republican US representatives during August to join their 111 colleagues who have already signed on to Waxman's bill calling for an independent investigation. Local peace groups around the country have picked up on that call. MoveOn is also planning national media ads that highlight not just the State of the Union deceit but other prewar statements by the President and his aides that exaggerated intelligence about Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. Before the recess, a score of House members, led by Schakowsky and Ohio Democrat Sherrod Brown, read some of the 414,000 MoveOn-generated letters to Congress on the subject into the Congressional Record. One of Brown's constituents, Sandy Fronius of Strongville, Ohio, wrote: "I am just a typical middle-aged, middle-class American, and I am deeply concerned about the possibility that the young men and women of our Armed Forces were sent into danger for no good reason. If we were lied to, I believe Mr. Bush should be relieved of his office."

To be sure, developments in Iraq could change circumstances dramatically. If Saddam Hussein is captured or killed, or if a credible cache of WMDs is discovered, the Bush team might yet claim justification for presidential exaggerations. But if WMDs remain elusive, if significantly more Americans die, if complaints from soldiers and military families about a war with no exit strategy are amplified, activists will be further energized and journalists should be emboldened to search out new revelations about the credibility of Bush's case for war. (It's worth remembering that Watergate was a two-year story, while the truth about the Johnson Administration's Gulf of Tonkin lies took even longer to emerge.)

The one certainty is that if it gets hot for Congress in August, it will get even hotter for Bush in September. Under increasing pressure before the recess, the GOP chairs of the House and Senate Intelligence Committees promised new hearings when Congress returns. And Waxman's push for an independent investigation is gaining momentum. "It took a long time for the media to get to that point, but it happened," says Waxman. "It took a long time for public opinion to get to that point, but it's happening. I know there are those who don't believe we can ever get the House and Senate to that point, but I don't think we dare to stop pushing." ■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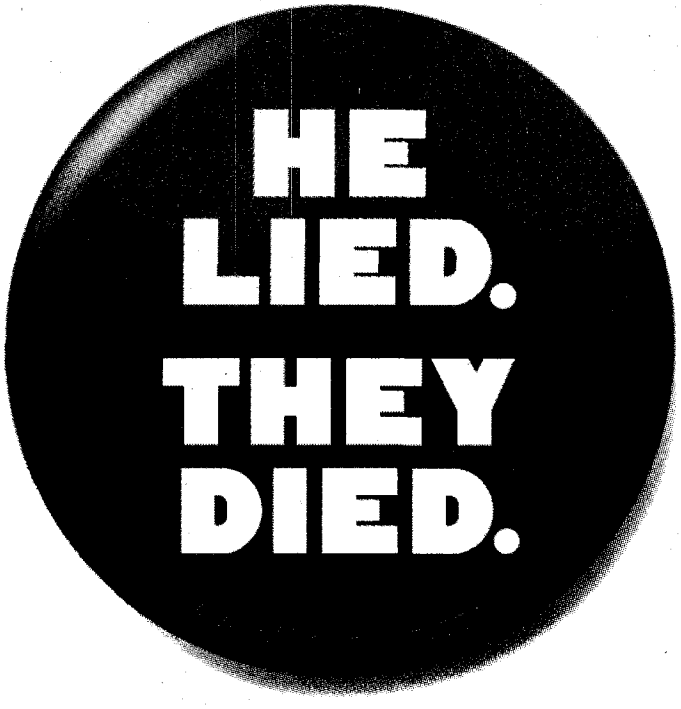

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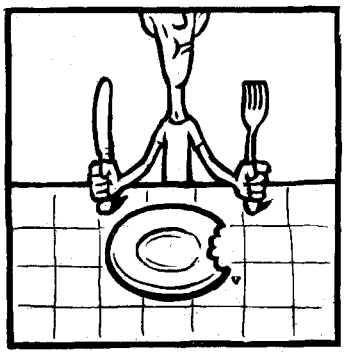
Hungry in America

TRUDY LIEBERMAN

I have no heart for somebody who starves his folks. —George W. Bush discussing North Korean leader Kim Jong Il and US food donations on CNN (January 2, 2003)



LARS LEETARU

Ellen Spearman lives in a trailer at the edge of Morrill, Nebraska, a tiny dusty town near the Wyoming state line. A few years ago she was a member of the working poor, earning $9.10 an hour at a local energy company. Then she got sick and had four surgeries for what turned out to be a benign facial tumor. New owners took over the company and told her she was a medical liability and could not work full time with benefits. For a while she worked part time without benefits until the company eliminated her position. So the 49-year-old single mother of five, with two teenage boys still at home, now lives on $21,300 a year from Social Security disability, child support and payments from the company's long-term disability policy she got as a benefit when she was first hired. That's about $6,000 above the federal poverty level, and too high to qualify for food stamps. But it is not enough to feed her family.

Food is the expendable item in a poor person's budget. With the need to pay for gasoline, car insurance, trailer rent, clothes, medicine and utilities, and to make payments on a car loan and $10,000 in medical bills, Spearman says three meals a day "take a back seat." She says she and her family eat a lot of rice with biscuits and gravy. Their diet is more interesting only when a local supermarket sells eight pieces of chicken for $3.99 or chuck roast for $1.49 a pound. "This country doesn't want to admit there's poverty," she says. "We can feed the world but not our own."

Spearman's predicament mirrors that of many Americans. While the most severe forms of malnutrition and starvation that prevailed through the 1960s have largely disappeared, some 33 million people live in households that aren't sure where their next meals are coming from—those whom policy analysts call the food insecure. And with poverty on the rise—the United States experienced the biggest jump in poverty in a decade in 2001, to nearly 12 percent of the population—their ranks are growing. At the end of 2002 the US Conference of Mayors reported a 19 percent increase in the demand for emergency food over the previous year. Food pantries, shelters, soup kitchens and other emergency food providers now serve at least 23 million people a year. "They are America's dirty little secret," says Larry Brown, who directs Brandeis University's Center on Hunger and Poverty. "They are hardworking have-nots who cannot pay the rent, medical bills, and still feed their families."

Food and hunger are a lens through which we see what America has become: a country indifferent to the basic needs of its citizens, one that forces millions of them to rely on private charity that is inadequate, inefficient and frequently unavailable. As people with low and middle incomes have lost their jobs, their families line up for handouts, something many thought they'd never have to do. Hunger exposes the casualties of the ever-widening income gap between the rich and the rest of the population, and the damage inflicted by a twenty-year campaign waged by right-wing think tanks and conservative politicians to defund and delegitimize government. That campaign, which has succeeded in returning the public's view of poverty to the Darwinian one that prevailed before the Progressive Era at the turn of the twentieth century, is emblematic of the right's assault on public programs, which has used the old-fashioned notion of personal failing as the vehicle for accomplishing its political goals. Indeed, few politicians now advocate for the hungry.

The Way We Were

Beginning in the 1930s and into the 1940s, when Franklin Roosevelt articulated his Four Freedoms, including the freedom from want, America made a commitment, if not always perfectly executed, to feed the less fortunate. To be sure, the commitment was to some extent self-serving, in that food programs were designed to use up the surpluses produced by American agriculture. Still, there was a recognition that people couldn't always help themselves, and over the following decades champions emerged in Congress to battle for the needs of hungry people. From Robert Kennedy etching the face of hungry kids into the American conscience during his widely publicized trips to Appalachia to George McGovern and Bob Dole fighting for food stamps on the floor of the Senate, politicians stood up to help the hungry, putting government resources behind school lunches; school breakfasts; WIC, which feeds pregnant women and young children; and child nutrition.

When the nutrition programs under the Older Americans Act were created in 1972, authorizing special food programs for the elderly, it was Richard Nixon who pushed for more funding. Throughout the 1970s few Americans would have disputed the idea that the federal government had a major role to play in feeding the hungry. "Hunger was a problem we came much closer to solving in the 1970s," says James Weill, president of the Food Research and Action Center. "Food stamps were more available, wages at the bottom were higher and there was less inequality."

But then came the Reagan Revolution, with its emphasis on cutting government and the taxes needed to support it. In 1981, when the Heritage Foundation published its first *Mandate for*

Trudy Lieberman is a regular contributor to The Nation. *Research assistance was provided by the Investigative Fund of the Nation Institute.*

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Leadership, the right laid out its plan "to restrain the food programs" and reduce the federal government's role. Some of its proposals, like moving the functions of the Community Food and Nutrition Program to the states through block grants, have come to pass. That has meant less money, intensive competition among nonprofit organizations and ultimately less outreach and advocacy for the hungry.

In his speech accepting the Republican presidential nomination, Ronald Reagan coined the term "safety net." Implicit was the idea that like a trapeze artist who needed a safety net only to prevent rare catastrophes, government would help only those in dire need and that most of the time people could provide for themselves. Almost everyone, including many liberals, bought into the concept, which subtly shifted the purpose of social programs from assuring adequate living standards for all to helping the few who occasionally fell on hard times. Reagan attacked the legitimacy of food stamps by painting a picture of undeserving welfare queens who ate at the government trough while buying vodka with their benefits. That notion stuck, and public support for food programs waned.

Now conservatives are again on the attack. Last December in the *Washington Post* Outlook section, Douglas Besharov, director of the Project on Social and Individual Responsibility at the American Enterprise Institute, argued that the WIC program contributed to childhood obesity. He posited that real hunger is found "predominantly among people with behavioral or emotional problems such as drug addicts and the dysfunctional homeless," and he criticized liberal advocacy groups, unions and farmers for standing in the way of reform and modernization, code words the right often uses to build support for dismantling a program while making it seem like they're improving it. Conservative columnists and op-ed writers picked up his arguments. This year WIC and the child nutrition programs are scheduled for Congressional reauthorization. While there's no question Congress will reauthorize the programs, planting doubt about them increases the chance politicians will change the rules to make fewer people eligible. WIC is the golden child of the food programs. If it is tarnished, the rest will lose favor as well.

Less Money, Fewer Meals

Spending on the cluster of nine domestic food programs rose from $30.3 billion in 1982 to $42.7 billion in 1992 (in 2002 dollars). In the 2002 fiscal year it had fallen to $38.4 billion—less than 2 percent of the entire federal budget. Those numbers reflect drastic reductions over time—the Reagan Administration's cuts in 1981–82 and the cuts mandated by welfare reform in 1996—as well as modest funding increases between 1984 and 1993. "The cuts at the beginning of the Reagan Administration and the '96 cuts were far bigger than the modest increases in intervening years," says David Super, general counsel for the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. "Funding has recovered partially but is well behind what it would have been had it not been for the cuts."

Food programs for the elderly have suffered a steep decline in federal appropriations after adjusting for inflation. In 2002 the government spent $716.5 million on home-delivered meals and on meals provided at senior centers. Ten years earlier it spent $767.4 million (in 2002 dollars), which explains why all over the country older Americans stay for months on waiting lists for a hot meal delivered to their door. The budget for New York City's home-delivered meals programs illustrates the federal government's fiscal retreat: Twenty years ago Washington funded 80 percent of the program and the city funded the rest. Today the federal government provides less than 20 percent, and city and private sources provide the balance.

Because food stamps are an entitlement, spending depends on how many people apply. Currently, that amount is about $22 billion, making food stamps by far the largest federal food program. Food stamps, which date back to 1939, have never been used by 100 percent of all people who are eligible. The high point came in 1994, when 75 percent of all eligible people were on the rolls; the low point was in 1999, when only 58 percent were getting help. "A golden era for the food-stamp program never existed," said Doug O'Brien, vice president of America's Second Harvest. There was a time, though, when government agencies, such as the now-defunct Community Services Administration, sponsored extensive outreach and advocacy programs with the goal of enrolling more people. But after the Heritage Foundation attacked its advocacy work in the early 1980s, enrolling more participants was no longer encouraged, remembers Charles Bell, a VISTA worker at the time.

Twenty years ago, Washington funded 80 percent of New York's home-delivered meals programs; now it's less than 20 percent.

Participation also depends on how hard states make the application process, and in the 1990s they made it very hard. Unfriendly rules requiring excessive verification, more frequent visits from caseworkers and the need to reapply in person, as well as pressure on the states to reduce their error rates, discouraged many from applying. California, New York and Texas have practically criminalized the process by requiring applicants to be fingerprinted, an action that automatically brands them as potential cheaters. It's hardly surprising that only about half of all eligible residents in those states get food stamps. Receiving food stamps has always carried a stigma—"It's an intentional thing that keeps the program small and saves money," says Agnes Molnar, a senior fellow at New York City's Community Food Resource Center. Food-stamp participation is rising again nationwide, but many states still discourage applicants. In New York City, despite a sharp increase in unemployment, food-stamp use actually dropped between 2001 and 2003. "Low-income people have walked away from the program," O'Brien says.

According to Mathematica Policy Research, the average monthly benefit is $185, but the actual amount varies by family size. For elderly people living alone the average benefit is $50, but for 35 percent of this group, the benefit is only $10 because medical expenses and rent are not high enough to offset their monthly income, usually less than $600 from Social Security's Supplemental Security Income. When Congress reauthorized the food-stamp program last year, a move to increase the minimum benefit to $25 failed. "Because of the obsolescence of the as-

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sumptions on which food-stamp levels are based, they are no longer sufficient to prevent or guarantee against hunger," says Janet Poppendieck, a sociology professor at Hunter College in New York City. The food-stamp program assumed that families had 30 percent of their income to spend on food, an estimation that was more realistic when there was a much larger supply of low-income housing. Food stamps were intended to fill in the gap between the 30 percent and the cost of an arbitrarily set thrifty food plan. But today poor families use 50–80 percent of their income on housing and have far less to spend on food. The food stamps they do get are not enough for an adequate diet. So families run out of food before the month ends. That's when they turn to the 50,000 food pantries and soup kitchens across the country, links in an intricate system of food rationing that began as a temporary response to cuts during the Reagan years.

Pantries as a Way of Life

Emergency food is now entrenched in nearly every city and town. It represents a fundamental failure of government to adequately feed its citizens. About 30 percent of the people who visit pantries receive food stamps—a stark indication that even those who do get stamps need more help and that many who need help are not getting them. The pantries' very existence lulls the public and politicians into believing they are the answer. But neither politicians nor anyone with adequate income would care to shop at them.

Food pantries are community supermarkets in poor neighborhoods. But shoppers can't come and go as they please, nor can they always choose the food they want. "Sometimes your heart can run away with your funds, especially when there are children involved," says Roy Lawton, a program director at Panhandle Community Services in western Nebraska. So, he adds, there must be limits. At his agency in Gering, people can come three times a year if they qualify. A family of four can have an income no greater than $23,920. If they have one dollar more, or if they've come too often, pantry workers send them to area churches that have less stringent rules.

The quantity of food people get is almost always restricted in some way. At Bread for the City in Washington, DC, workers simply hand clients a food bag after a computer check verifies that they have visited only once during the month. There's no choice of foods here. Food director Verneice Green explains that it would be "too chaotic" to let people in the back room, where the food is stored. At St. Paul of the Shipwreck in San Francisco, the pantry resembles a child's board game. At each stop along a room lined with shelves, a person can choose a set number of items according to a color code and family size. At the West Side Campaign Against Hunger in Manhattan, director Doreen Wohl wants her pantry to resemble a supermarket so clients feel better about taking handouts. The currency here are points assigned to each item. A four-person family can take ten points' worth of food from each of the protein, vegetable, fruit and dairy sections, while a two-person family is allotted six points. On a busy Wednesday 280 people wheel shopping carts through the aisles, but the shelves are not well-stocked. There was less emergency food from the federal government than Wohl had expected—74,000 pounds less this year from the so-called TEFAP program.

At the pantries, people get hand-me-down food. It comes from supermarkets where it has stayed on the shelf too long or is damaged, or it comes from manufacturers that have produced too much of one item or made some product that didn't sell, like a cereal named Buzz Blasts or a soft drink that's blue. "Blueberry cola looks like windshield washer fluid, but in food banking, you take the good with the bad," says Bernie Beaudreau, director of the Rhode Island Community Food Bank. Castoff food, however, doesn't always make for the most nutritious diets, and arguably contributes to the diet-related health problems prevalent among the population forced to use food pantries. Amtrak has been a big supporter of the New England Shelter for Homeless Veterans in downtown Boston, and many of the 300,000 meals the shelter serves each year revolve around Italian wraps and sausage, egg and cheese breakfast sandwiches donated by Amtrak. "It's a struggle to provide a steady, nutritionally balanced diet, because

The Young and the Old

On a frigid morning in Washington, DC, two boys about 13 or 14 come to the driveway of the Ambassador Baptist Church, where the day's meager food offerings are displayed. They scrounge through boxes of celery frozen from the cold, bananas, yogurt, sour cream, iceberg lettuce and day-old pastries, which are also half-frozen. "I don't like yogurt," one boy says. He and his friend fill their cart with lettuce and bananas and disappear down the street.

One in three children living in the District of Columbia doesn't get enough calories and is poorly nourished, according to Lynn Brantley, who heads the Capital Area Food Bank. Often they have no evening meal. Some 9 million children a year are now showing up at food pantries, shelters and soup kitchens, according to America's Second Harvest, the umbrella organization for the nation's food banks. "It's a horrifying trend when our agencies tell us that they are buying high chairs for the first time, and kids are coming in on their own looking for food," says Pat Barrick, marketing director for City Harvest in New York City.

The elderly, too, are turning up at food pantries in record numbers, for the cost of growing old in America has gone up. Men and women living into their 80s and 90s have seen incomes that were fixed long ago shrink relative to skyrocketing costs for basic needs. Claudia Lennhoff, who directs Champaign County Health Care Consumers, an advocacy group in Champaign, Illinois, says elderly clients need medicines that must be taken on a full stomach, but often they ask, "Do you think it will hurt if I take it without food?"

And all over the country the homebound elderly, too infirm to cook or walk to a food pantry, are on waiting lists for home-delivered meals. Sometimes people just coming home from the hospital die before their turn comes up, says Leah Monson, who runs a home-delivered-meals program in Whittier, California. But waiting lists are not likely to disappear, and the percentage of old people who are poorly nourished—some 40 percent, according to the federally funded Institute of Medicine—will increase. T.L.

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of our reliance on donated food," says a shelter worker. Fresh meat and produce are often scarce at the pantries. Last fall in Lincoln, Nebraska, the Lincoln Action Program had enough ten-pound boxes of hamburger for the 400 to 600 people who were coming every week for food, and one day 300 clients lined up for onions, squash, apples and eggplant. But, says outreach worker Sheryl Haas, "there are weeks when the pickings are really slim."

They will grow slimmer as major changes sweep through the emergency food system. Many of the 216 food banks across the country that supply the pantries have less donated food to give away, particularly canned and boxed products that were once the food banks' staples. "Cereal donations are down 30–40 percent or more," says Frank Finnegan, who heads the St. Louis Area Food Bank. Mike Gillespie, who manages the warehouse for the Capital Area Food Bank in Washington, DC, used to get a call once a month from Giant Food to pick up excess products, but now, he says, Giant hasn't called in months. In 2000 Giant gave the food bank about 2.5 million pounds of food. Last year its donation fell to 1.6 million pounds.

Ironically, food banks have caused supermarkets, manufacturers and restaurants to become aware of how much food they were giving away. With the help of scanning technology and just-in-time inventory systems, businesses changed their practices. At the same time, more outlets such as Super Wal-Marts, dollar stores and flea markets have sprung up where manufacturers can sell their products. Although they get tax breaks for donating, food companies would rather sell than donate.

Today it's hard to find a champion for the hungry in Congress, much less in the executive branch.

The only bright spot is that more produce is available because food-bank managers have aggressively sought donations of fruit and vegetables, and major donors have given money so perishables can be shipped quickly around the country. Yet many pantries don't have adequate refrigeration, or they are staffed with elderly volunteers who can't lug around 100-pound bags of onions and potatoes.

Some food companies have embraced "cause marketing," a new kind of charity that ties a firm's brand with a warm, fuzzy cause like hunger. "It's doing well for the company and doing good at the same time," explains Carol Cone, CEO of Cone Communications in Boston. But cause marketing hardly begins to solve the needs of hungry people. With Cone's help, the giant ConAgra Foods supports some of the 900 Kids' Cafes around the country—including one of the twenty-eight in Washington, DC, that serve 1,200 kids out of 43,000 children who are eligible. Other individuals and groups try to fill in the gaps. Last year Washington Wizards owner Abe Pollin raised $1 million to pay for 680,000 meals during the summer, a time when supplies at food pantries run low and school breakfasts and lunches are not available. But when the money ran out, the meals stopped.

Underlying the premise of food banks was the notion that someday they would not be needed and would disappear. Instead, food banking has become big business. Pantries have proliferated, there are jobs to protect, salaries to pay, an infrastructure to maintain. Perhaps as a result, there's a split among food-bank leaders, with some believing they should advocate for government solutions to the fundamental problems of poverty and others believing that rounding up more donations is the answer. Some food-bank boards of directors are fearful of direct advocacy. "We've chosen not to get involved politically," says Finnegan. But, he says, "private industry is not going to be able to solve this problem. If it's anyone's responsibility, it's the government's."

Getting to Root Causes

Hunger, of course, is symptomatic of a deeper problem—inadequate income, which hits even the US military at a time when the country has chosen guns over butter. The WIC office located at Offutt Air Force base near Omaha serves 650 servicewomen, wives of military personnel and their children each month. To qualify for free food, a family of three, for example, must have a gross income this year that's less than $28,231. "Most people don't have enough money. That's why they're in the program," says a WIC official. Through the years, however, feeding people through special programs rather than dealing with their lack of money became the palatable political choice.

Those who favor the route of special programs say it would not take a lot of money to insure that all Americans are fed. "Six billion dollars more could cut hunger in half in two years," says David Beckmann, president of Bread for the World. "It's an eminently solvable problem." But more government money is not likely. In fact, there will probably be less. Earlier this year House Republicans passed legislation that would transform the food-stamp program into a block grant, yet another way of pushing responsibility to the states and letting them decide when and if they have sufficient revenues to feed people. It's a way of converting an entitlement into revenue streams for states. After a few years they can divert money to other programs. It's not hard to imagine what will happen to the needy if the recession and budget deficits continue for several years. At the same time, the Agriculture Department hopes to make it more difficult to qualify for free and reduced-price school lunches, because, it says, some kids are getting cheap lunches even though their families are not eligible. Data, however, show that when more income documentation is required, it reduces participation among eligible children.

Today it's hard to find a champion for the hungry in Congress, much less in the executive branch. Hunger is not seen as a pressing political problem. In January, representatives of food advocacy groups met with Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman and were told there were no extra dollars for food. "We were told it's going to be a tight budget year," says Beckmann. "They said there would be no more money for child nutrition, and we had to think about how to do more with the money we've got." Robert Blancato, a food-advocacy group lobbyist, says food programs must be recast to generate Congressional interest. "In this environment, programs need additional buzzwords to survive," he says. "If you can repackage the meal programs so they don't look like meal programs, they have a better chance. There's a whole new priority structure in where the money is going."

Meanwhile, no one in Washington talks much about living

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wages, increasing the minimum wage, indexing it for inflation or expanding the earned-income tax credit. But living wages are the only solution if people are ever to move toward the self-sufficiency and personal responsibility that politicians and the public demand of them. It's hard to buy food when the money you have goes for ever-increasing shelter costs, healthcare because you have no insurance and childcare because there are few low-cost options.

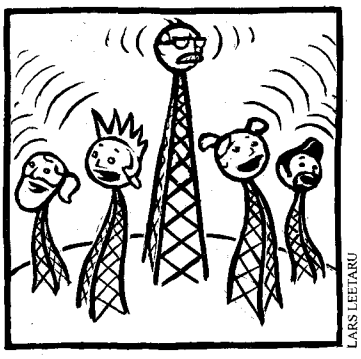
No modern industrial nation should protect the nutritional well-being of its citizens through handouts. But until an outraged public decides that hunger is unacceptable in the richest country in history, there will be more Ellen Spearmans asking why they cannot feed their families. ■

HOW SMALL AND SCRAPPY RADIO STATIONS SURVIVE IN THE CLEAR CHANNEL ERA.

Different Frequencies

BROOKE SHELBY BIGGS

Clear Channel is destroying radio. At least, that's the popular mantra these days. Radio consolidation—which shifted into high gear with the Telecommunications Act of 1996 and has been fostered by a pro-big-media majority at the Federal Communications Commission—has resulted in the Wal-Martification of radio. Across the nation, stations are being gobbled up by huge chains like Clear Channel, which then monocrop their playlists. It's the same fifty mindless cookie-cutter songs played in an endless, soul-numbing loop, the same conservative talk shows, even the same deejays doing the same shows for simultaneous broadcast in a half-dozen markets nationwide. Jockeys are losing their jobs as the big chains consolidate and centralize their work forces. There, in the distance, is the faint swan song of independent radio. Abandon all hope, ye who flip thy radio dial.



LARS LEETARU

That could be true; the recent ruling of the FCC to further deregulate the media, though now under challenge in Congress, is further evidence of the power of the media giants. But for the irrepressibly optimistic, there are beacons of hope: Dozens of independent and small-network stations are regularly whipping the Clear Channel rivals in their markets. If quirky, original, community-oriented music radio is dead, how do these tenacious little outfits keep beating Clear Channel and its ilk at their own game? And what can small-time stations and local radio networks learn from their examples?

Part of what separates these scrappy stations from the competition is a bet they're making that the big consolidators' fundamental philosophy—that Americans only want to hear familiar music that doesn't challenge them—is wrong and can't last. Ultimately, the bet goes, the listening public will tire of being underestimated and will seek out alternatives.

Singer-songwriter Dar Williams, who got her first big breaks from independent and college radio, will take that bet. She sticks with her independent label (Razor & Tie) despite overtures from the big boys, regularly plays benefits and fundraisers for independent stations, and has even written a song about the deejays who spoke to her from her childhood transistor radio. Williams regularly plugs local independents at her shows. "You can tell the ones that are getting it right. When I mention them from the stage, the audiences cheer for them," she says. "Those stations that have a very corporate way of doing things, they don't command that kind of allegiance. Those stations that allow themselves the flexibility to be genuinely involved in their communities, to play local artists and to respect their audiences—that sows a vibrant kind of loyalty."

One Popular Pig

KPIG, near Santa Cruz, California, is one station already reaping the rewards of Clear Channel exhaustion. By its own admission, KPIG has one of the weakest signals in its market. Yet it consistently ranks in the top five against all formats in all demographics in its market, and first in the 25–54 demographic and in the Triple-A (adult album alternative) format. It has owned the ratings charts there for six years. What makes KPIG unique is that in an age of format consultants and universal playlists, live deejays at KPIG still pull records off the shelves and play practically whatever occurs to them, whenever they feel like it. They even answer the phone. This is old-school rock radio. "You scan the dial and you know when it's the PIG. You may not know the song, or even the artist. You know it's us because you've never heard it before and it's good," says program director Laura Hopper. "That's our strength. There is no one else like us out there."

Hopper has been with the station for all of its fourteen years, and through three ownership changes. "We have survived intact, which is a minor miracle," she says. The credit for the station's longevity goes in large part to its fiercely loyal listeners. Five years ago, then-new owners New Wave Broadcasting tried to switch the station's format to classic rock, air "canned" shows and pare down the staff. In a popular uprising Hopper dubbed "The Revolution," Santa Cruz residents stood on street corners handing out fliers of protest—complete with New Wave executives' home phone numbers. New Wave backed down. "People consider KPIG a part of the community," says Hopper. "When you have that kind

Brooke Shelby Biggs, a journalist living in San Francisco, is the author of Brave Hearts, Rebel Spirits: A Spiritual Activist's Handbook *(Anita Roddick Books).*

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of loyalty, and ratings like ours, [the owners] are afraid to mess with you." The Chamber of Commerce in Santa Cruz includes KPIG in its tourist brochures of things to see and do (and hear) in the area.

KPIG is now owned by Mapleton Communications, which recently bought out New Wave. Mapleton owns more than a dozen stations in Central California. That's chicken feed compared with Clear Channel, which owns more than 1,200 stations, including seven in KPIG's market alone. Hopper says she feels relatively good about KPIG's future, despite the climate of deregulation and consolidation. But she does feel like she's always looking over her shoulder. "I'd be stupid not to look around and worry. My friends [in the industry] are clinging on desperately or gone."

Mom & Pop

WOXY near Cincinnati is an anachronism, inasmuch as it's quite literally a mom-and-pop operation in one of the biggest radio markets in the country. Doug and Linda Balogh have owned this indy modern-rock station since 1981. Doug Balogh says there are good reasons they have managed not only to stay alive but to thrive and even innovate in this era of bully megabroadcasters: They provide a real alternative in an increasingly uniform field of competitors.

WOXY is the last independently owned alternative radio station in a top-twenty-five market anywhere in the United States. It ranks near the middle in its market, according to the latest Arbitron ratings, but above at least three Clear Channel rivals. The only reason WOXY exists at all, says Balogh, is that he got in at the right time (before the Telecom Act of 1996), with what was then a completely new and original format—modern rock. He also credits the family-business atmosphere he cultivates in the studio. "We all live in this community. There are real live people walking in our halls and answering our phones. We take pride in our product," he says.

Balogh doesn't worry about being forced out of business by Clear Channel, but he is bitter about consolidation. He says the real problem isn't the megabroadcasters so much as those in Congress who made them possible, and less visible monopolists like Arbitron, which audits radio audience share nationwide. Balogh questions whether Arbitron's measurement methods really reflect listening tastes. He contends that the rise in shock-jock radio is the result of brief, fleeting spikes in listenership in less-than-representative samples, and not of long-term consumer trends. "There used to be two constituencies in this business: advertisers and listeners. Now with this concentration there are three: Wall Street, stockholders and the fraction of 1 percent of the population who actually fill out [Arbitron listening] diaries."

Balogh is a technophile who recognized the potential of the Internet early. Now WOXY is streamed live on the Internet, and featured on proprietary services through contracts with AOL, Netscape and iTunes, a subsidiary of Apple Computer. It is currently the highest-rated modern-rock station on the Internet. WOXY is profitable, but Balogh isn't satisfied. He is writing a book titled *Killing the American Dream*, about how consolidation has eliminated the opportunity for any future entrepreneur to do what he has done at WOXY.

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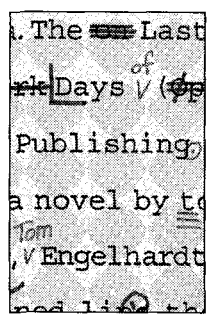

Engelhardt is also the author of the new novel, *The Last Days of Publishing*, which Herb Gold in the *Los Angeles Times* called a "satisfyingly virulent, comical, absurd, deeply grieving true portrait of how things work today in the sleek factories of conglomerate book producers."

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Going Public

Thanks to the few FCC regulations not yet pillaged by the current Administration, public radio is still the only permanent alternative to commercial-laden, variety-starved popular radio. For music lovers, the crown jewel of public radio is WNCW in Spindale, North Carolina, where in a single set you may hear Flatt and Scruggs followed by Jimi Hendrix followed by Edith Piaf followed by Omara Portuondo. Eclectic doesn't begin to describe it. The programmers at WNCW seemed like cultural geniuses two years ago, when the sleeper hit "O Brother, Where Art Thou?" spawned a smash, Grammy-winning soundtrack packed full of the same roots music—primarily Americana and bluegrass—that had been WNCW's staple for years. "We've been 'O Brother' forever," laughs recent program director Mark Keefe. "To us, Doc Watson is a cultural icon. Maybe to someone somewhere else, he's just some guy in the emergency room."

It's about celebrating diversity, says Keefe. His role was not to mollify his audience but to challenge it. And to be of service to the music itself. "I may not put Ibrahim Ferrer's new album in heavy rotation, but you can be damn sure I'm going to play it, because it broadens our listeners' horizons and our jocks' horizons, and it keeps music alive. The only way to keep music alive is to play it." Keefe is also unafraid to take chances, including risking offending the more conservative among his listeners. The week the war on Iraq began, Keefe had Dan Bern's "Talking Al Kida Blues"—a song that could make the Dixie Chicks blush—in heavy rotation. Let's not forget that an overzealous Clear Channel official circulated a list of more than 150 songs with "questionable" lyrics affiliates might have wanted to avoid playing immediately after September 11, most of them—like Elton John's "Bennie and the Jets"—a hundred times tamer than Bern's ditty.

But complaints at the more daring WNCW are few and kudos frequent. In the past six years, WNCW's listenership and budget have both doubled. Keefe estimated that he had a weekly total of 100,000 unique listeners over 12 (the biggest segment is males 40–45). The annual operating budget for the current year is a healthy $1 million—78 percent of it raised through membership drives and underwriting. Keefe says the station is consistently in the top ten in its market (by his estimation, the thirty-sixth-largest market in the country) and regularly beats commercial stations in various demographics and times throughout the week. WNCW is so successful, in fact, that the owner of a small chain of commercial stations based in Wilmington has just hired Keefe away from WNCW to recreate the magic further up the dial.

But WNCW is a rarity in public radio. Even on the left end of the dial, homogenization is a problem. Most public stations hew to three basic formats, or a combination thereof: news-talk (dominated in the extreme by National Public Radio programming), jazz and classical. And while in the news-talk segment NPR provides unquestionably more objective fare than programs offered by Clear Channel's Premier Radio Networks (which licenses Rush Limbaugh and Laura Schlessinger's shows, among others), it is also guilty of perpetuating the same type of uniformity that critics chastise Clear Channel for. So some who flee the sameness of corporate radio for public stations find themselves in a different kind of sameness. In some significant markets—namely New York (WFUV), Philadelphia (WXPN), Los Angeles (KCRW) and Louisville (WFPK)—program directors haved jettisoned most if not all of their NPR and jazz/classical programming for post-baby-boomer eclectic music programming and locally produced news.

Rita Houston, music director for New York City's WFUV, airs NPR news headlines but none of its longer programs. She says she believes there's room—and even a civic need—for public stations that aren't NPR clones. "NPR has grown so much as a brand that more Americans know what NPR is than know what Clear Channel is. Is that saturation creating a lack of regional access? Absolutely."

WNCW's signal reaches five different states and overlaps a half-dozen other public radio stations, all of which broadcast NPR programs during at least part of the day. Homogenization, even noncommercial homogenization, makes for boring radio, according to WNCW's Keefe. "In the narrowcast model, you can't break new artists," he says. "We played John Mayer and Jack Johnson, artists like that, long before they broke with big recording contracts and the marketing machines behind them. We're like, 'Why are people so surprised, wondering where they came from all of a sudden?'"

Not Waiting for Congress

There are indications of a changing tide in Congress. The FCC vote in June may have served as a kind of final straw. The struggle to persuade Michael Powell's commission to retain existing restrictions on ownership brought together an impressive—if unlikely—cast of media populists, from the National Organization for Women to the National Rifle Association. That caught the attention of lawmakers from both sides of the aisle. On July 23, the House voted overwhelmingly against Powell's effort to increase the number of television stations a single media company may own. But even if the Senate follows the House's lead, that action would address only one aspect of consolidation. (There are, however, some radio initiatives in early legislative stages.)

People like Keefe at WNCW suspect the public will demand better before the government gets around to mandating it. "What we do flies in the face of conventional wisdom about radio," he says. "We play the music they say nobody listens to, and yet we have a rabid audience that can't get enough of it. We are living proof that it really does work."

Rita Houston of New York's WFUV says that even if not all of these iconoclastic stations are clobbering Clear Channel, overall listening trends don't bode well for the corporate formulaic approach. Houston says listenership is up at WFUV, WNCW and comparable stations like WXPN in Philadelphia, even as overall radio audiences are shrinking. Arbitron confirms both trends. "We've been doing the same thing for the past ten years, and our numbers have always been healthy, but we have never seen numbers like the last couple of years," she says. While WFUV is not breathing down Clear Channel's neck in the country's biggest radio market, it is an oasis for the clonecast weary.

In this sense, Clear Channel's clone approach is the best thing that's happened to independent radio. "When the mainstream grows, the underground grows with it," says Houston. "People are getting tired of mainstream radio, and they find us," says Houston. "We call ourselves 'refugee radio,'" says Keefe. "A lot of our listeners come to us because they are so fed up with

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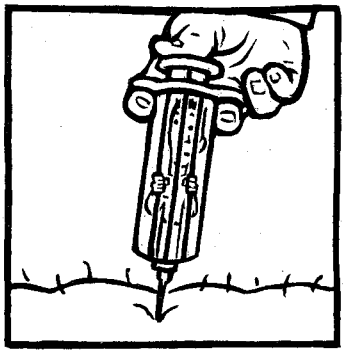
corporate radio in general. I've always said our slogan should be 'We remember to play what you forgot you liked.'" WOXY's Balogh has some advice to smaller stations that don't want to be swallowed up or squashed by the corporate radio giants: Recognize that you can't compete on the basis of money or marketing muscle. "Be original. If you're playing what everyone else is playing, you're vulnerable. Nothing's stopping anyone from flipping to the other guy." ■

A BUDGET CRISIS AND A PRISON BOOM MAKE THE STATES A VANGUARD FOR DRUG REFORM.

The Drug War Goes Up in Smoke

SASHA ABRAMSKY

The war on terror may be too new to declare victory or defeat. But this nation has been fighting a war on drugs for more than a quarter-century, ever since New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller mandated harsh drug sentencing in 1973—and it may be time to announce that this is one war we've lost. More than a million people are serving time in our prisons and jails for nonviolent offenses, most drug-related, at a cost to the public of some $9.4 billion a year. Many billions more are spent by the states and the federal government on drug interdiction, drug-law enforcement and drug prosecutions. Harsh laws that require lengthy minimum sentences for the possession of even small amounts of drugs have created a boom in the incarceration of women, tearing mothers away from their children. Much of the country's costly foreign-policy commitments—especially in Latin America and the Caribbean—are determined by drug-war priorities. And yet drug use has actually soared, with twice as many teenagers reporting illegal drug use in 2000 as in 1992.



LARS LEETARU

The idea of putting more and more Americans in prison, a great number of them for crimes related to drug addiction, grew out of "broken windows" social theories developed by criminologists such as James Q. Wilson in the 1970s. Wilson and his acolytes believed that unless police and the courts aggressively cracked down on crime, the social compact would degenerate into anarchy. They argued that even nonviolent offenses, such as breaking windows or possessing small amounts of marijuana, contributed to an anything-goes climate in which more serious crimes would proliferate. By the 1980s, these theories had entered the political mainstream, allowing Presidents Reagan, Bush, Clinton and now George W. Bush to score political points by denouncing addicts and appearing tough on crime all at the same time. Though politicians may have embraced this framework because it sold well to voters, its implications for the nation's health have been extreme. The drug war exiled addiction from the realm of public health, placing it almost exclusively in the hands of law enforcement and the courts.

At the philosophical core of this war on drugs, as fought by the likes of Bush Sr.'s drug czar, Bill Bennett, are twin ideas: Drug use is a moral wrong in itself, and drug use makes people more likely to commit a host of other crimes, from prostitution to burglary to murder. To fight drugs, the drug warriors have insisted, it isn't enough to go after the narco-kingpins; government agencies and courts must disrupt the drug supply-and-demand by prosecuting, and imprisoning, increasing numbers of low-level street dealers, even users themselves.

In the past few years, however, these policies have come under attack from surprising quarters. Opponents range from public health activists to libertarian-minded political figures such as former Secretary of State George Shultz. On the one hand, the critics have argued, these policies have failed to make progress toward a drug-free America. On the other, the war has proved to be too expensive to sustain. In an era of shrinking state resources, legislators have come to understand that budgets cannot be balanced, and needed social programs cannot be maintained, unless the country's bloated prison system is shrunk back down to a more realistic size. These two concerns have converged to create a window of opportunity for drug-policy reformers to push their case where it matters most: in the states.

Winter is hesitatingly giving way to spring, and New Mexico's former Governor Gary Johnson is tending to a broken leg in preparation for an expedition to climb Mount Everest. His daredevil athleticism is a marker of the same temperament that allowed Johnson, a Republican, to become the only governor ever to publicly support drug legalization while in office. The significant progress he made on drug-policy reform during his eight-year tenure helped to turn the tide for state reform movements across the country. "Johnson was a huge advocate," says Jerry Montoya, who runs a county needle-exchange program in the state, "ahead of federal policy in terms of thinking, in terms of philosophy."

In 2002, the last year of Johnson's tenure, state legislators voted to limit the ability of state police to seize the assets of those accused of drug-related crimes; to return a certain degree of case-by-case discretion to judges trying nonviolent drug cases; and to waive the federal ban on welfare benefits for former drug offenders who have completed their sentences.

During his tenure, Johnson, a fiscal conservative, made enemies of liberals through his hostility to tax-and-spend policies and his fondness for privatizing government functions—includ-

Sasha Abramsky, a freelance journalist, is the author of Hard Time Blues: How Politics Built a Prison Nation *(St. Martin's).*

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ing prisons. He frequently vetoed the creation of new government programs, using, in his words, "an iron fist" on the state budget. But he made enemies of conservatives as well, primarily over his outspoken views on drug policy. He combatively declared the war on drugs "a miserable failure" and ambitiously investigated alternatives, including legalization.

Although he abstains now even from caffeine, sugar and alcohol, Johnson admits that he once inhaled—quite often. "I didn't hide it," he says. "Growing up [in the 1960s], I smoked marijuana regularly in college and a little bit after college. And I experimented with other drugs." This experience, combined with a strong libertarian streak, allowed him to be an iconoclastic thinker on drug policy. "If we legalized all drugs tomorrow, we'd be better than we are now regarding death, disease and crime reduction," he says. "There'd be more money into education; and more money into treatment for those who want or need treatment. At present rates, I'm going to see, in my life, 80 million Americans arrested for illegal drugs. The human cost of what we're doing is untold."

From conservative Louisiana to progressive Michigan, from Kansas to California, all the big drug-policy questions are up for debate.

Johnson concluded that policies such as distributing clean needles to addicts and opening up regulated heroin-maintenance programs would do more to manage addiction than simply sending the police out to round up addicts; he also concluded that legalizing some categories of drugs and carefully regulating their sale would remove a huge pool of money from organized-crime cartels, boost government tax revenues and free up large amounts of money to be invested in drug education and health centers.

Retired Judge Woody Smith, who served on the bench in Albuquerque in the 1980s and '90s before joining a Johnson task force on drug law reform, says, "He believes our approach [to the war on drugs] was wrong, from a personal liberty standpoint and a pragmatic standpoint." Smith, too, was eventually persuaded that the country's approach to drugs needs to be drastically overhauled. "Legalization and regulation are the only answer," he says now. "It's not a perfect solution, but it's a hell of a lot better than what we're doing now."

This evolution of thinking in New Mexico has spread across the country in recent years. Increasingly impatient with the costly combination of policing and prosecution, voters, along with a growing number of state and local elected officials, have abandoned their support for incarceration-based antidrug strategies and have forced significant policy shifts. From conservative states like Louisiana to traditionally progressive states like Michigan, from small states like New Mexico and Kansas to large states like California, all the big questions are up for debate: Should marijuana be decriminalized, at least for those with pressing medical needs? Should mandatory minimum sentences for low-level drug offenders be abandoned? Should prison terms for crimes of addiction be replaced by mandated treatment? Should governments fund needle exchanges and other harm-reduction programs for drug users as a way of controlling epidemics? Increasingly, at the local level, the answers are yes, yes, yes and yes.

In 1996 voters in Arizona passed Proposition 200, transferring thousands of drug offenders into treatment programs. In California, a similar initiative passed in 2000, Proposition 36, channeled tens of thousands of addicts into treatment—and reduced the number of inmates imprisoned on drug-possession charges from almost 20,000 at the time of the law's passage to just over 15,000 in June 2002.

In 1998 Michigan repealed its notorious "650-lifer" laws, which decreed a mandatory life sentence for those caught in possession of more than 650 grams of certain narcotics. Then, last Christmas, Governor John Engler signed legislation rolling back the state's tough mandatory-minimum drug sentences and its equally tough "lifetime probation," which had been imposed on many drug offenders following their release from prison.

Early this year North Dakota repealed its one-year mandatory-minimum sentence for those convicted on a first-time drug-possession charge, as did Connecticut in 2001. Indiana and Louisiana have repealed some of their statutory sentences, and Louisiana has restored parole and probation options for inmates convicted of a host of nonviolent offenses.

In Kansas a sentencing commission has proposed major reforms of the state's mandatory sentencing codes coupled with an expansion of treatment provisions. Despite opposition from conservative legislators, these recommendations were accepted in late March. "It's definitely a change of philosophy regarding how you deal with drug offenders," says Barbara Tombs, executive director of the Kansas Sentencing Commission. "With the state budget cuts and [many] drug treatment programs in prisons being eliminated, there is an urgent need to look at alternatives to incarceration for drug prisoners."

At the same time, a clutch of states, including California, Washington, Oregon, Hawaii, Alaska and Nevada, have adopted medical marijuana legislation, legalizing the drug's use for specific medical conditions such as AIDS wasting, and a similar measure in Colorado was invalidated on a technicality.

Taken as a whole, these reforms represent the biggest change to state drug policies in more than a generation.

But while state legislatures have opened up the financial and moral debates about drug policy at the local level, the federal government is having none of it. The most recent Bureau of Justice Statistics data show that the number of people charged with drug offenses in federal courts rose sharply, from 11,854 in 1984 to 29,306 in 1999. During roughly the same period, the amount of time a federal drug prisoner could expect to serve in prison more than doubled, from thirty months to sixty-six months.

On many issues, from gun ownership to environmental regulation, the Bush team has backed the conservative cause of states' rights. But the Administration has blocked even mild attempts at state drug-law reform and has challenged state reformers over issues such as medical marijuana and needle exchange. The Justice Department has fought medical marijuana laws in court and launched a massive PR campaign against pot use. It has even pursued federal prosecution of those who legally distribute medical marijuana under state laws. Attorney General John Ashcroft is "willing to push even the smallest cases," says David Fratello, political director of the Campaign for New Drug Policies.

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"We're seeing a new level of pettiness and aggression."

Clinton's drug czar, Gen. Barry McCaffrey, was criticized by drug policy reformers for his refusal to discuss legalization initiatives and his zeal for militarizing the drug wars overseas. But these advocates find Bush's czar, John Walters, to be even worse. Under Walters's reign, the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) has encouraged state prosecutors to go after medical marijuana providers, especially in California, and has driven underground virtually every medical-marijuana buyers' club in the country. It has held press conferences against citizens' reform initiatives. And it has sponsored extravagant advertising campaigns in state and local papers and on television stations—with $180 million earmarked for antimarijuana ads alone—that demonize teen drug use by linking it to terrorism.

Walters has also put pressure on state legislators, declaring that many drug-law reforms would contravene federal laws. In the fall 2002 elections, he traversed the country, stopping in Arizona, Michigan, Nevada and Ohio, campaigning against medical marijuana efforts and meeting with newspaper editors to push his case. The House version of the ONDCP Reauthorization Act originally included a provision that would have brought such politicking to a new level, allowing the White House to spend almost $1 billion in public money on ads attacking state and local ballot measures that promote drug-law reform. Interestingly, a Republican-led House committee removed that provision before approving the bill.

John Ashcroft is 'willing to push even the smallest drug cases. We're seeing a new level of pettiness and aggression.'

Yet in many ways Walters may be fighting yesterday's war on drugs. States like California, with its extensive system of medical-marijuana buyers' clubs, and New Mexico, with its public support for needle exchange, are beginning to shape up as the vanguard of a whole new approach to drug addiction.

In the poorest barrios of Albuquerque, teams of workers with Youth Development, Inc. (YDI) take their vans from one addict-client to another. Late into the night, they visit shooting galleries, ordinary private homes and the cardboard shelters constructed in alleyways by some of the city's homeless. At each, they reclaim dirty needles, fill in forms identifying the numbers returned, give out an equivalent number of clean needles, provide bottles of needle-cleaning solutions and also offer their clients HIV tests.

This was once a fairly undergound operation. But now groups like YDI operate across the state with strong support and funding from New Mexico's Department of Health. All told, they distribute hundreds of thousands of clean needles per month to almost 7,000 card-carrying clients—and retrieve hundreds of thousands of dirty needles.

New Mexico's harm-reduction approach seems to be bearing fruit. A study from 1997 found that while the majority of the state's injection-drug users had been exposed to hepatitis C—suggesting that considerable needle-sharing was taking place—less than 1 percent of injection-drug users tested positive for HIV. Health experts saw a brief window of opportunity in which to create workable needle-exchange programs that could prevent HIV from spreading, as hepatitis C already had. So far, the programs appear to have worked: In a state with one of the largest per capita injection-drug-using populations in the country (New Mexico recorded 11.6 heroin deaths per 100,000 between 1993 and 1995, compared with a national averge of 5.4 deaths per 100,000), the needle-exchange program has kept HIV to a bare minimum within the close-knit community of users. Department of Health experts estimate that even today, that number is around 11 percent—a low rate, compared with data from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention showing that 27 percent of injection-drug users are HIV-positive in cities like Boston, Miami and Washington.

"My whole attitude about drugs and drug users has changed," says Rosie Clifford, a nurse who works in a public health center in the hardscrabble community of Los Lunas, twenty miles south of Albuquerque. "I used to be very conservative, very law and order. But even if you're really conservative, and you look at needle exchange, you ought to see it as a good way to stop the further spread of HIV and hepatitis and any blood-borne disease."

Danny, a twentysomething heroin addict, has been a client of YDI since 1999 and speaks with gratitude about the group's services. "I don't have to worry about used needles, about diseases," he says. "There was a time if I needed a new syringe I'd have to buy it for five bucks, and you don't know if it's new or not." YDI has provided Danny with health information, and, if he needs it, the group will arrange for a doctor to visit him at home.

Elsewhere in the state, in Rio Arriba County, near the nuclear laboratories of Los Alamos, public health workers are distributing not only needles but Narcan, an injected medication that can reverse the effects of a heroin overdose. So far, they believe they have saved about a dozen lives by training addicts in its use.

Many of the communities in this beautiful mountainous region are desperately poor. Often the roads are dusty and unpaved, dotted with impromptu altars set up in memory of those killed in car accidents—or murdered in battles over drugs and drug money. Heroin and methamphetamine addiction is so widespread here that in some houses, three generations of users share drugs with one another. Yet, while the police in many parts of the country routinely arrest users—and even level paraphernalia charges against addicts bringing dirty needles into exchange programs—in the town of Española, police chief Richard Guillen allows harm-reduction coordinators into his jail and encourages his officers to coax addicts to seek treatment.

Guillen believes that the old approach to drug addiction has failed: "All we're doing is interdiction at the federal level," he says, "and we haven't been successful in reducing demand." By contrast, he says, his local police have recognized that "an addiction to drugs is just like any other illness. Let's try to get them treatment, counseling. Without treatment, all we have is a revolving door."

In the 1980s and early '90s, faced with a growing crack epidemic and the attendant media reports of out-of-control drug gangs and waves of violent crime, the public threw its support behind extremely coercive antidrug policies. Then the crime rates

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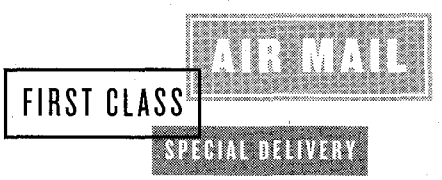
began falling and, gradually, public attitudes began to soften. High-profile research projections and a growing cadre of advocacy groups—many, like the Lindesmith Center and the Drug Policy Foundation, funded by billionaire philanthropist George Soros—encouraged this shift in attitudes by suggesting that treatment was more effective than prison at lowering both addiction and crime. The advocacy groups drafted model reform legislation and promoted ballot initiatives like those that have diverted nonviolent drug offenders away from prisons in Arizona and California. The researchers produced numerous studies showing that it costs far less to place an addict in treatment than in prison—and that treatment has a higher success rate in breaking the addiction cycle. A survey conducted by the Pew Research Center in 2001 found that fully 73 percent of Americans favored permitting medical marijuana prescriptions; 47 percent favored rolling back mandatory-minimum sentences for nonviolent drug offenders; and 52 percent believed drug use should be treated as a disease rather than a crime. Faced with this grassroots shift, local elected officials, too, began to re-examine the beliefs and theories underlying America's antidrug strategy.

Ever since recession hit two years ago, these changes in thinking have been bolstered by fiscal realities. While the Bush Administration may think it can fight a war on terror and run an occupation of Iraq while also cutting taxes and continuing the drug-war imprisonment boom, states are dealing with a more bitter reality. The Administration may want to devote resources to shutting down medical-marijuana buyers' clubs set up legally under new state laws, but states are no longer so enthusiastic. They are realizing that their budgets, buffeted by declining tax revenues, simply can't support major domestic-security spending and, at the same time, continued high expenditures on drug-war policing and mass incarceration. With drug treatment cheaper than incarceration and increasingly viable in the court of public opinion, drug-law reform is gaining ground despite federal intransigence. More and more elected officials are beginning to conclude that it's time to bring home the troops in the war on drugs as we know it. "Treatment instead of incarceration across the whole country has become a political safe ground," former Governor Johnson says. "It could not have been said safely prior to three years ago. Now it's totally safe." ■

Letter From Sarajevo



by Brian Whitmore

Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina

The Rev. Franklin Graham ought to visit Sarajevo. So, for that matter, should anybody else who thinks Islam "is a very evil and wicked religion," as Graham said it was shortly after the September 11 attacks; or that it is extreme and violent, as the conservative Christian televangelist Pat Robertson said of the faith last year.

And while strolling the smooth cobblestone streets of the Bosnian capital's Old Town, anybody holding such views might do well to stop in the city's Central Mosque and listen to what Grand Mufti Mustafa Ceric, leader of the nation's 1.6 million Muslims, has to say. In his speeches, Ceric has been known to quote the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi as often as he cites the Koran. He has also led calls for an "Islamic avant-garde" to promote human rights and democracy; frequently celebrates the historic and spiritual links among Islam, Christianity and Judaism; and implores Muslims to be careful about using words like "jihad." To Muslims, Ceric says, the word "may mean many good things, but to non-Muslims it means only one thing: violent actions against their faith." For Bosnian Muslims to live among other religions in a small country, he says, is a sign of strength rather than weakness. "I believe neither the weak nor the aggressive will inherit the earth, but the cooperative," Ceric said in a 2001 speech in Vienna titled "Islam Against Terrorism."

Ceric is about as tolerant and ecumenical as religious leaders come. But his views are neither unique nor on the liberal fringe here. Rather, they tend to reflect and reinforce those of the vast majority of Bosnia's Muslims, who make up 44 percent of the country's 3.7 million people. Despite a genocidal war from 1992 to 1995, in which Muslims were the main victims, Islam in Bosnia remains an astonishingly broad-minded faith that has largely made its peace with other religions, the West, modernity, democracy and the separation of mosque and state. This has remained true despite an influx of fundamentalists during the war who—funded largely by the Saudis and preaching the strict Wahhabi form of Islam—have led efforts to radicalize the country.

Bosnian Muslims, who prefer to be called Bosniaks, never tire of pointing out that in downtown Sarajevo a mosque, a synagogue, a Roman Catholic cathedral and an Eastern Orthodox church sit within blocks of each other. "Islam, through the Koran, accepts all other religions, including Christianity and Judaism," said Amel, a 22-year-old student.

At first glance, Bosnia seems an unlikely place to find such tolerance. The festering wounds and lingering mistrust from a war in which Serb and Croat militias waged a vicious campaign of "ethnic cleansing" against Muslims are still evident here. But due to centuries of tradition, and the strong leadership of people like Ceric, Bosnian Islam has managed to remain what many scholars call one of the most tolerant branches of the faith in the Muslim world. "All our experience in Bosnia is living with other traditions," Rusmir Mahmutcehajic, a Sarajevo-based sociologist and author of the book *Bosnia the Good: Tolerance and Tradition*, told me. "This kind of epistemic modesty is the basis for the Bosnian experience. What we have is valuable."

Brian Whitmore covers Eastern Europe and the Balkans for the Boston Globe.

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During the siege of Sarajevo, when the Serb militias captured territory in the city, they would often spray-paint THIS IS SERBIA! on buildings. At one point the Bosnian Army briefly took back a chunk of land on Sarajevo's outskirts, and a Muslim soldier noticed the graffiti on a post office. According to local legend, the soldier then scribbled an answer: THIS IS A POST OFFICE, YOU FUCKING IDIOTS!

The incident, now a part of Sarajevo folklore, reveals not only Bosniaks' irrepressible sense of humor, even in the darkest of times; it also speaks volumes about just what those defending Sarajevo were fighting for—not Islam, but the preservation of a city and a culture that had historically been a cosmopolitan melting pot. According to a survey conducted in 1996, a year after the war ended, a startling 93 percent of Bosnia's Muslims said they preferred to live in a multiethnic and multiconfessional society. In contrast, 83 percent of Bosnia's Serbs and 81 percent of the country's Croats said they wanted to live only with their own ethnic group.

Today, eight years after the war ended, Sarajevo is still cosmopolitan, but due to a massive influx of refugees from Serb- and Croat-controlled areas, it is 80 percent Muslim. The city's mosques are packed with the faithful for Friday prayers. But its hip downtown bars are also full of revelers enjoying drinks on Saturday night. Just as many Roman Catholics flout the church's restrictions on contraception, abortion and premarital sex, Bosniaks tend to ignore Islam's prohibitions against drinking alcohol. And anyone hoping to see strict dress codes here will be severely disappointed. There are as many women strolling the streets sporting fashionable—and often revealing—dress as there are wearing veils and head scarves.

"Islam leaves room for local traditions," said Ahmet Alibasic, a lecturer at Sarajevo's Faculty of Islamic Studies. "Local custom is one of the sources of Islamic law," he added. "I am a devout Muslim, and my wife wears the veil, but everyone should be able to make their own decision about dress." As he prepared to attend afternoon prayers, Alibasic relaxed in his office at the institute and explained over a cup of tea why Bosnian Islam has developed the way it has. "When you have Muslims living together with non-Muslims, there tends to be more tolerance," he said. "There is no talk here about an Islamic state. Islam is either realistic or it is not Islam."

Such attitudes, says Charles Kurzman, a sociologist at the University of North Carolina specializing in Islam and democracy, are part of a progressive trend that is emerging throughout the Islamic world. "There is something special going on in Bosnia, but the desire for liberalism, tolerance and democracy is widespread among Muslims," Kurzman said. He cited polls conducted from 2000 to 2002 by the University of Michigan's World Values Survey showing that more than 75 percent of the population in six majority-Muslim countries—Algeria, Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Morocco and Turkey—agree that democracy is better than any other form of government.

But Bosnia's specific history also explains why liberal attitudes are so strong here. Most Bosniaks adhere to the Hanafi school, a progressive branch of Sunni Islam that is predominant in Turkey and the Balkans. Bosnia was ruled by the Muslim Ottoman Empire from 1463 to 1878 and by Roman Catholic Austria-Hungary from 1878 to 1918. Under the Ottomans, Christians were required to pay additional taxes but otherwise enjoyed broad religious freedom. And Austria-Hungary tolerated and even encouraged the development of a strong Bosnian Muslim religious identity, historians and scholars say. Moreover, during the Habsburg period, progressive currents in the faith that were emerging out of Cairo and Istanbul heavily influenced the development of Islam in Bosnia. It was under Habsburg rule that Bosnian Muslims discovered that they could "adopt European culture, keeping at the same time the peculiar characteristics of their lifestyle," Fikret Karcic, an Islamic historian and legal scholar, wrote in his book *The Bosniaks and the Challenges of Modernity*.

This easy mixing of the European and the Islamic is clearly visible in the Faculty of Islamic Studies' graceful corridors, airy classrooms and spacious courtyards. The atmosphere is both casual and frantic as students chatted in the halls and prepared for exams. You could be in the religious studies department of any European—or American—university. "For me it is normal to be in this environment," said Seida, a 20-year-old student wearing traditional Islamic dress and a head scarf. Fundamentalists who wish to regulate lifestyle choices, restrict the rights of women and impose their religious beliefs on others simply "have trouble accepting the modern world as it is today," she said. "People should have a choice" about what to wear, she added. "The only thing that is important is what you wear in your soul."

As Bosniaks guard the frontlines of religious tolerance, just as they not long ago manned barricades to defend Sarajevo, they still face some daunting challenges. But this time the attacks are coming from other Muslims. During the war, thousands of Islamic fighters, or mujahedeen—including many veterans of the Afghan war against the Soviet Union—streamed into the country from all over the Arab world to fight their latest jihad. Most Bosnians were not interested in a jihad; they just wanted to survive and live in peace. But with an arms embargo in place and the West's commitment to intervening in question, they reluctantly accepted the help.

After the war, hundreds of mujahedeen settled in Bosnia and married local women. Many of them also hooked up with the scores of Saudi-sponsored Islamic charities that have set up shop here. The charities have spent millions of dollars to rebuild homes, renovate schools and feed, clothe and shelter orphans and impoverished widows. The generosity, however, comes with a catch: They have also used their presence here to promote a fundamentalist Islam. "We have a big problem with the Saudis," a senior Bosnian official told me, speaking on condition of anonymity. "They are spreading around huge amounts of money to help rebuild Bosnia. But they are also building mosques and spreading a version of Islam that is alien to our Bosnian Islam."

The Islamic charities and the remaining mujahedeen together form a front that is trying to spread Wahhabism, the strict Islamic movement founded in the eighteenth century by Abdul-Wahhab, who converted the Saud tribe, which now rules Saudi Arabia. According to a report by the Sarajevo branch of the International Crisis Group, an international think tank, Saudi charities require "female beneficiaries to cover their heads and their children to attend classes in their faith." The Wahhabis have been more successful in winning converts in Bosnia's impoverished rural areas

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than in its cosmopolitan capital of Sarajevo. "This is destructive to Bosnia morally and culturally," Mahmutcehajic said. The Wahhabis are also provoking conflict with Serbs and Croats. In the tense and ethnically divided city of Mostar, local media reported graffiti shortly after September 11, 2001, reading: "Bin Laden, brother, send a 767 against the Croats."

But Bosnian intellectuals and religious scholars say that if the Wahhabis are hoping to buy converts in Bosnia, they are wasting their money in the long run. Everything from their strict dress codes for women to their claim to be the sole true Islamic faith to the severe architectural styles of their giant mosques contradicts—and even offends—Bosnian tradition. "The Wahhabis do a disservice to Islam and to Muslims," Alibasic said. "They have a very selective knowledge of Islam, and their solutions don't work," he added. "They have no future here in Bosnia, but as long as they remain nonviolent they will have a place."

Some of the mujahedeen have also been linked to terrorism. In October 2001 six Algerian nationals suspected of plotting to attack American interests in Bosnia were arrested, turned over to US custody and subsequently transferred to Guantánamo Bay. Those arrests, and others since, have made many Bosnians uneasy that all Muslims, themselves included, would be suspect in the war on terrorism.

But Mustafa Ceric sounded an optimistic note—paraphrasing King. "My heart is full of hope to...dream that my three children will one day live in a world where they will be judged not by the faith of their hearts, but by the content of their character," Ceric said. ■

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In mid-October of 1805, after being saved from starvation by Indians, the exhausted Corps of Discovery led by Captains Lewis and Clark finally reached the Columbia River Basin—gateway to the Pacific. The success of their two-year quest to chart the nascent American Empire was now assured. As the powerful current pushed their canoes to the ocean, they entered the high sagebrush desert, teeming with deer, elk and wild horses. They were astonished by countless salmon, some weighing over 100 pounds, in the crystal clear water—more than in any river of the world.

LARS LEETARU

While camping nearby, Clark wrote in his journal, "We were obliged for the first time to take the property of the Indians without consent or approbation of the owner." He reasoned that "the night was cold and we made use of a part of those boards and Split logs for fire wood." Before, Lewis and Clark had scrupulously "made it a point at all times not to take any thing belonging to the Indians." But the temptation was too great, setting an ominous precedent.

On January 16, 1943, Gen. Leslie Groves, the military leader of the Manhattan Project, chose Hanford, in eastern Washington near the Lewis and Clark campsite, for the world's first large nuclear reactor. The area, the traditional wintering grounds of many Indian people, offered key elements Groves was looking for: plenty of water and electricity from the Columbia River dams, and sufficient isolation that nuclear accidents were regarded as tolerable. The Indians were promptly banned from their homes and from religious, fishing and medicine-gathering sites, and farmers were uprooted. Within about two and a half years the Hanford "B" reactor had made enough plutonium to destroy Nagasaki, Japan, on August 9, 1945.

Over the following forty-seven years, until it was closed down in 1990, Hanford's 570-square-mile nuclear complex continued to produce not just plutonium but massive contamination. There were many large releases of radioactivity, particularly iodine-131, which rapidly contaminates air, vegetation and milk supplies. Because it is absorbed mostly in the body's thyroid gland, radioactive iodine has been linked to thyroid cancer and other types of thyroid damage. Between 1944 and 1947, more than 684,000 curies were released (the accident at Three Mile Island released about fifteen curies). In addition, some 440 billion gallons of contaminated liquids were directly disposed into the ground at Hanford—enough to create a poisonous lake the size of Manhattan and more than eighty feet deep. Hexavalent chromium, a carcinogen, is now being found to damage fish in the river, while large amounts of radioactive contaminants were spread down the Columbia River and to parts of the Pacific Ocean along the coasts of Oregon and Washington. According to Timothy Jarvis, a scientist then with the Energy Department's Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, enough dangerous materials were dumped at Hanford to have "the potential to induce cancer in every person currently on the planet, 208 million times over."

In the late 1980s, the federal government finally acknowledged its responsibility for Hanford and other similar sites around the country and began the largest, most expensive and most challenging environmental cleanup program in US history. As Senator John Glenn put it in 1988, "What good does it do to defend ourselves with nuclear weapons, if we poison our people in the process?" Spurred on by angry citizens, states, "downwinder"

Robert Alvarez, a senior scholar at the Institute for Policy Studies, served as senior policy adviser to the Secretary of Energy from 1993 to 1999. Research assistance was provided by the Investigative Fund of the Nation Institute.

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Northern Exposure

Delta Junction, Alaska

In spring 2002, construction crews excavating silo pits for a missile defense site in Fort Greely, Alaska, chanced upon a disturbing discovery—a buried cache of twenty-four mysterious fifty-five-gallon drums leaking a toxic solvent used to neutralize highly lethal chemical weapons. Construction was halted, workers were rushed to the hospital and a hazardous materials team descended upon the site. The surprise dumpsite is one of several that have come to light since Fort Greely was last used in the early 1970s as a top-secret chemical and biological weapons test center.

The refusal by the Department of Defense to fully release information about those experiments—and Fort Greely veterans' fear that they may be prosecuted under the Army's nondisclosure order if they speak publicly—have kept the bases' activities largely out of the public eye. Now, however, a lawsuit filed against the DOD last fall on behalf of veterans and the release of previously classified documents are undermining the department's efforts to hide this disquieting chapter of military history. They reveal that the test site at Fort Greely was operated with cavalier disregard for the health of both military personnel and the residents of the small towns that surround the base. This new information also suggests that deadly materials used at the site are still unaccounted for.

Prior to the release of these documents, glimpses of what occurred at Fort Greely only came to light because of the tireless work of local organizations and veterans concerned about its safety. The Tanana Chiefs Conference, an organization that represents the native villagers who live near the base, has fought a David and Goliath battle with the Army for more than five years. After failed attempts to access Army records, the TCC invested its scarce funds in sending researchers to the national and Army archives in Washington, DC, Seattle and St. Louis, and in hiring investigators to interview Fort Greely veterans and longtime residents.

It's now clear that the Army created a 19,000-acre reserve in 1952 for the explicit purpose of testing deadly chemical and biological weapons. Activities at the Gerstle River Test Site, as it was known, were so secret that they remained a mystery even to Delta Junction, the 800-person town that borders the site. Between 1962 and 1967 the Army blasted hundreds of rockets and bombs filled with sarin and VX nerve agent into the region's wildlife-rich forests. Because of the base's remote location, disposal of unused weapons was often haphazard and reckless, say veterans of the cold war tests.

According to one veteran, Richard Carlson, a former chemical specialist who was sent to Fort Greely in 1959 to take part in open-air trials of VX and mustard gas, personnel there buried approximately six canisters containing two quarts of lethal VX agent about a half-mile from the Alaska Highway. Carlson saw discarded mustard-gas containers leaking into the ground, contaminating a tract of land surrounding a storage shed and migrating into the local ecosystem. In one notorious incident, the Army piled canisters of nerve agents on a frozen lake during the winter of 1966. When the lake melted in the spring, the lethal chemicals sank to the bottom. More than three years passed before the Army drained the lake and cleaned up the neglected arsenal.

In 1965, for reasons that are unclear from the declassified documents, the Army sprayed *Bacillus globigii* aerosols, a bacteria implicated in serious hospital infections, up and down the populated valley surrounding the base. Sampling crews were stationed in protective gear downwind from the releases to detect the bacteria's movement and impact, but nearby residents were never informed of the tests. "The likelihood of individuals being exposed was very low. It was not a populated area," said Barbara Goodno, program director of Public Affairs and Outreach in the DOD's Deployment Health Support Directorate.

In fact, more than 700 people lived in the Tanana Valley in 1965—a fact apparently ignored by the Army. "There's no doubt, based on the medical literature, that there was a risk to a certain portion of the population—those more prone to infection, like the very old and very young," said Leonard Cole, a biological and chemical warfare expert at Rutgers University in New Jersey.

Initially, the Gerstle River Test Site covered 19,000 acres, but in 1964 it was expanded by 79,000 acres onto land leased from the State of Alaska. Later, when the Army tried to end its lease and transfer the land back to the state as public property, a 1979 report by the General Accounting Office warned that "the Army cannot certify that the land has been decontaminated and available for other uses because essential records which provide details on the tests are not available." Even a former commander at the test site, Col. James Henrionnet, was uneasy about the safety of the property. "Disparity in our interpretation of facts...as well as the incompleteness of records...give rise to doubt about our collective understanding of the status, location and quantities of residues," he stated in a letter to senior Army authorities in 1977. Nonetheless, the transfer took place, and the leased portion of the test site is today a state-managed bison range and public recreation area used for hunting.

Now, thirty years after the last tests were conducted, veterans have come forward with various health problems that they suspect are related to their involvement in the secret weapons-testing program. But until last year, their complaints were perplexing to medical staff with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), because references to the veterans' tenure at Fort Greely had been omitted from their medical records. "I asked the VA if [my medical problems] might have to do with the tests at Fort Greely. They said: 'We have no record of those tests. You must be crazy—nothing like that ever happened,'" said Fort Greely veteran Jerrel Cook.

As the cases mounted, the VA pressured the DOD to declassify documents that might help medical professionals deliver care to the cold war veterans. "We didn't know what it was, but we knew we were fooling with some pretty powerful stuff," said Josh Willhite, a Fort Greely veteran who was never informed of the risks he faced at the site. Both Willhite and Cook, who have suffered various illnesses over the years, are now part of a class-action lawsuit filed in October 2002 against the DOD by veterans, their families and the Vietnam Veterans of America. The law-

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suit, however, does not include civilians who may also have been exposed.

Though the tests and burial of the materials occurred decades ago, they likely remain a public health threat today. Chemical weapons experts say agents like VX, sarin and mustard gas retain their toxicity over decades when sealed in airtight containers like the drums used by the Army. Yet during public input meetings, Army representatives dismissed allegations that the site was still dangerous. "A lot of this is lore," said John Killoran, public affairs officer for the US Army Corps of Engineers in Alaska. "We've had anecdotal reports where people have said there's this and the other thing buried here.... We've found nothing."

Alaska firefighters, however, tell a different story. Fire crews sent to extinguish blazes on the base in 1998 and 1999 were pulled off the fire when a nearly constant barrage of live ammunition and explosions threatened the safety of firefighters. "We were getting conflicting information from the military about the safety of these areas. There was undocumented ordnance out there that the military couldn't answer for," said Hank Falcon, a smoke jumper who fought the 1998 fire.

Meanwhile, the DOD has yet to address the allegations of veterans like Richard Carlson, and information on the tests conducted before 1965 is still locked in the DOD's archives—as are details about the impact the tests may have on public health. Goodno says the department does not intend to release any more information unless it's medically relevant to the VA. That policy was bolstered by the Bush Administration's March 25 executive order delaying the release of millions of documents and giving the government more discretion to keep information indefinitely classified.

In Congress, after media attention around the issue last fall, the veterans' cause was championed by Alaska Governor Tony Knowles and Senator Ted Stevens, both of whom called on the DOD to release the full details of the secret tests at Fort Greely. But Knowles was recently voted out of office, and Stevens's commitment to the cause may be tenuous, given that he was the top Senate recipient of military-industry donations during the last election cycle.

If the base is clean and poses no public threat, the DOD should have nothing to fear, argues Steven Aftergood, director of the Project on Government Secrecy at the Federation of American Scientists. "It's a genuine outrage—national security is supposed to protect the nation and not the bureaucracy," Aftergood said.

Meanwhile, veterans continue to file claims for service-related health benefits, to no avail—not one has been granted healthcare on the basis of exposure to agents used in the secret experiments. But the Pentagon's integrity could be at stake if it continues to guard secrets about the US government's testing of warfare agents on civilians and servicemen. Says Aftergood, "It could serve not only the interests of American veterans but its own credibility if it would simply disgorge all of these documents." KOREY CAPOZZA

Korey Capozza is an investigative journalist based in San Francisco. She received a grant from the Fund for Investigative Journalism to research this article.

lawsuits and Congressional pressure, cleanup operations continued over the next decade. Since 1989, more than $60 billion has been spent for the DOE cleanup, and an additional $200 billion is estimated as needed to deal with the daunting environmental legacy of the nuclear arms race over the next several decades. Hanford's budget alone is bigger than the Environmental Protection Agency's entire Superfund program.

Now, however, the DOE is proposing to terminate its environmental mission at Hanford, the most contaminated area in the Western Hemisphere, as well as at other sites. Seeking to free up tens of billions of dollars for other military purposes, the DOE, in an Orwellian sleight of hand, is attempting to redefine more than three-quarters of its most dangerous radioactive wastes by renaming them as "incidental"—this despite the fact that the National Academy of Sciences said in a May 2003 report that the hazards "will persist for centuries...millennia...or essentially forever."

Meanwhile, the Hanford downwinders, whose legal battles against the federal government have been thwarted at every turn, continue to suffer. "The people in this area have been forced into poverty, they fall through the cracks and they die," says Kay Sutherland, who suffers from numerous cancers and has seen disease kill five members of her family. "I am a Holocaust survivor of the American cold war."

Poisoned Fish, Poisoned People

The legacy of Hanford is grim. Thousands of Indians eating chemically contaminated fish from the Columbia River near the plant have very high risks of contracting diseases. In August 2002, the Columbia River Basin Fish Contaminant Survey, a study conducted by Indian tribes and the EPA, reported that nonradioactive contamination, such as PCBs in fish—which are eaten in far greater numbers by tribal people than by non-Indians—are found at the highest levels in the section of the river that runs through the site known as the Hanford Reach. According to the study, tribal children eating fish from the Hanford Reach have 100 times the risk of immune diseases and central nervous system disorders as non-Indian children. Risks of contracting cancer among tribal people from eating fish from this stretch of the river were estimated to be as high as 1 in 50.

The DOE and its contractors blame metal mines in Canada and other sources for these high levels. But tribal people believe the US government is the main source of this and other problems. "During the fifty years of Hanford's operation, especially when the river was highly contaminated by the reactors, the site managers knew full well that tribal people were being poisoned. But they simply ignored their own data and considered us to be expendable," says Russell Jim, director of the Environmental Restoration and Waste Management Program for the Yakama Nation.

Tribal members aren't the only ones to suffer. About 80 percent of Chinook salmon, an economic, environmental and cultural icon of the Pacific Northwest, spawn in the Hanford Reach, and they represent a significant portion of wild salmon harvest in British Columbia and Alaska. Hexavalent chromium, made familiar to the public by the movie *Erin Brockovich*, has spread from the Hanford site into salmon spawning beds. "We still are unaware of the magnitude of the calamity which lies beneath the surface lands of the Hanford Reservation," said Bill Robinson, formerly of the Wash-

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ington Council for Trout Unlimited. In an October 2000 study of the impacts of chromium on salmon in the Hanford Reach, the US Geological Survey found that the "physiological effects from [chromium]" included "histological lesions in [the] kidney...associated with elevated doses...and reduced growth and survival."

In addition to the massive dumping, Hanford spread very large amounts of radioactive gases and particles over the countryside. During a site visit in 1951 by a panel of health experts from the DOE's predecessor, the Atomic Energy Commission, a Hanford official warned that radioactive releases posed "a very serious health problem." In a 1999 National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences study, researchers stated, "We found an epidemic of juvenile hypothyroidism among a population of self-defined 'downwinders' living near the Hanford nuclear facility." The study came several months before Federal Judge Alan McDonald—named last year by *Reader's Digest* as one of the nation's worst federal judges—had dismissed nearly all 5,000 claims that had been filed by Hanford downwinders in the early 1990s, ruling that the plaintiffs had to show they received enough radiation, based on DOE estimates, to double their risk of contracting cancer.

In June 2002 the US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit overturned McDonald, stating, "Radiation is capable of causing a broad range of illnesses, even at the lowest doses." But that same month the Centers for Disease Control released a second revision of a study it had performed, which concludes that there are no excess thyroid cancers among people who lived near the site. The study drew substantial criticism from a National Academy of Sciences panel, which found that "investigators probably overstated the strength of their finding that there was no radiation effect."

Defining Away Disaster

The Bush Administration recognized early on that one way to free up more military funds for projects it wanted to pursue was to spend fewer dollars on environmental cleanups. The biggest savings, it concluded, would come from less costly burial procedures for high-level radioactive wastes. About 100 million gallons of such wastes, generated by the chemical separation of plutonium and uranium from spent reactor fuel, have been stored for several decades in leaking underground tanks larger than the Washington State Capitol dome. In addition to remaining hazardous for hundreds of centuries, these wastes, more than half of which are stored at Hanford, give off lethal penetrating radiation, even in tiny amounts. Everything they come into contact with becomes radioactive and dangerous. For instance, dangerous penetrating radiation from a small capsule of Hanford's high-level radioactive waste, if placed in a crowded area such as a restaurant, could kill nearly everybody there in five to ten minutes.

The single most expensive cleanup technology is vitrification, a complex process involving heavy shielding and extensive remote handling that converts long-lived nuclear wastes into glass logs for permanent geological disposal. In November 2001 Jessie Roberson, the DOE's Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management, informed the agency's budget office that her top cost-cutting objective was to eliminate the need to vitrify at least 75 percent of the waste scheduled for vitrification. How? The department simply redefined away the hazards of the most dangerous wastes by calling them "incidental"—meaning they can be mixed with cement and buried in shallow pits or just abandoned.

On July 3 Idaho US District Judge B. Lynn Winmill struck down the DOE's plan as illegal. Ruling in a lawsuit brought by the Natural Resources Defense Council, the Yakama Indian Nation, the Shoshone-Bannock Tribe and the Idaho-based Snake River Alliance, the judge stated that the DOE cannot reclassify these wastes through a "whim" and must process them for geological disposal. "If the decision stands," says department spokesman Joe Davis, "it could lead to a tremendous burden on the taxpayers and jeopardize our ability to clean up our sites sooner." But, notes NRDC attorney Geoff Fettus, "If you follow the DOE's arguments to their logical conclusion, we might as well dispose of the equivalent of several thousand tons of spent commercial reactor fuel in unlined shallow burial near important water supplies."

The decision has also taken some momentum out of the nuclear industry's Congressional victory last year, which allowed the DOE to proceed with the construction and licensing of a permanent high-level radioactive-waste repository at Yucca Mountain in Nevada. Billions of defense funds have gone ostensibly to prepare for the storage of the DOE's nuclear weapons wastes there, but in reality the facility appears intended mainly for use by commercial nuclear power companies (including the bankrupt Enron Corporation), which have powerful friends in both the White House and Congress. If the DOE is required to proceed with its original plans for high-level military-waste disposal, thus using up Yucca Mountain's storage capacity, the nuclear power industry will not have enough room to dispose of its burgeoning inventory of spent reactor fuel. True to form, DOE Assistant Secretary Roberson asked Congress on July 17 to overturn the decision.

The Bush Administration has been aided in its efforts to downplay environmental risk at Hanford by the Competitive Enterprise Institute, which has ties to the oil and chemical industries and has attracted right-wing luminaries including House majority leader Tom DeLay. In "From Waste to Wilderness," a CEI report issued in 2001, author Robert Nelson advocates that the federal government abandon the current nuclear-cleanup program as "economically wasteful and counterproductive...like the beaches fouled by the oil from the Exxon Valdez, sometimes the environmentally preferable course of action is to do little or nothing."

Using terms like "risk reduction" and "cost savings," the Bush Administration and the DOE are thus starting to emulate the former Soviet Union, which unabashedly wrote off large areas of land, water and people living near nuclear weapons sites.

In addition to trying to redefine the threats represented by nuclear wastes, the Bush Administration is also trying to get out of its long-term responsibility for Hanford and other areas like it. Before the latest developments, the DOE's environmental cleanup program was based on the assumption that active remediation and waste-stabilization activities would continue until 2070. After that time, the DOE was to establish an environmental "stewardship" program for long-term management of these profoundly contaminated waste sites. But last year the Bush Administration abruptly canceled "long-term stewardship" planning by the National Academy of Sciences, signaling its intent to walk away from the DOE's environmental problems. As a result, "such a plan does not exist now, yet it is a critical element in the closure of all DOE sites," Peter Maggiore, Secretary of New Mexico's Environment Department, told the Senate Energy Committee in July of last year.

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The Nuclear States' Rights Battle

Hanford is among some 169 heavily contaminated nuclear weapons production waste sites in twenty-eight states. The Bush Administration's actions are putting it on a collision course with states such as Kentucky, New Mexico, Nevada, Ohio, New York, Missouri, California, South Carolina, Idaho and Washington, which are increasingly concerned about being left with de facto "national sacrifice" areas.

Washington State is drawing battle lines. "The state entered into a legally binding environmental compliance agreement with the DOE to remove and stabilize up to 99 percent of high-level radioactive wastes in Hanford's tanks," says Christine Gregoire, Attorney General of Washington. "We cannot allow these wastes to be permanently buried and have their dangerous radioactive plumes enter the Columbia River. DOE has not given us any credible reason why we should change this position."

Further fueling opposition is the DOE's attempt to dispose of some 341,000 cubic meters of radioactive and toxic wastes from other department sites in shallow, unlined "megatrenches" at Hanford. This would entail shipment of 43,000 truckloads of nuclear weapons wastes. According to Senator Ron Wyden, the "DOE's accelerated cleanup plan is just a shell game that will simply move the problem across our highways in order to create an even bigger environmental, safety and health danger to the Pacific Northwest."

In March of this year the State of Washington sued to block shipments of wastes from other DOE sites contaminated with plutonium and other similar isotopes from being stored at Hanford. According to the state, the department will not first commit itself to deadlines to remove Hanford's very large inventories of buried plutonium wastes. A state referendum campaign started by citizens' groups to block the DOE from shipping wastes to Hanford is expected to be on the 2004 ballot. Not to be outdone, the DOE countersued in April. "Recent actions by the State of Washington could have a chilling effect on cleanup operations at Hanford and elsewhere," Roberson, the DOE official, said.

And the DOE is using the power of the purse to get its way. In the fiscal year 2003 budget, the department has cut $800 million from its site-cleanup budgets and placed it into a "Cleanup Reform" account, which according to the department "will provide the stimulus necessary to reach agreement with States and regulators on new, more effective cleanup approaches."

"These are code words for economic blackmail," says Gerry Pollet, director of Heart of America Northwest, a longtime Hanford citizens' watchdog group. With the nation's economy still in the doldrums, states are under severe financial stress and are facing difficulties just in maintaining basic services. According to Pollet, the "DOE is cynically using the threat of budget cuts to force Washington into relaxing environmental standards, especially for DOE's most dangerous and long-lived wastes."

The best hope for the people and states with DOE waste sites is to push back in the courts, elections, the news media and academic circles. Their elected state officials and Congressional delegations must be encouraged to prevent the creation of "national sacrifice" areas that threaten our environmental and economic well-being. It was done before, in the 1980s, when these elements came together and forced the nuclear weapons program, for the first time, to come to terms with its massive environmental legacy.

Tom Carpenter, of the Government Accountability Project, which has represented numerous Hanford whistleblowers, says that "when the US government first chose to produce plutonium for nuclear weapons, it made a down payment on a vast environmental and health balloon mortgage." That balloon mortgage has now come due. But to put things into perspective, environmental cleanup for the nuclear arms race is only about 4 percent of the $5.8 trillion spent on nuclear weapons since 1940. The costs of walking away at Hanford, as we commemorate the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark expedition, are incalculable. ■

LETTERS
CONTINUED

(Continued From Page 2)

weapons program. Someone, somewhere—obviously with an interest in leading the United States to war against Iraq—deliberately created those forgeries. Who? And why? One of my sources says the documents may have been generated by Ariel Sharon's office—but if not, well, someone forged them. And, as important, Rumsfeld, Vice President Cheney and others apparently overlooked or ignored evidence that the documents were bogus. Why? Maybe hauling Abe Shulsky to the witness table can help uncover the truth. ROBERT DREYFUSS

LET'S HEAR IT FOR THE GARDEN STATE

Princeton, NJ

■ The gratuitous, tasteless bashing of New Jersey by Luc Sante is beneath you ["On Mediocrity's Cutting Edge," June 23]. Suburban architecture and values are rampant throughout the country, but New Jersey has much more. Beyond the Turnpike there are beautiful rural and coastal areas, many historical sites and towns like Cape May and Lambertville. Princeton, where I live, is an intellectual and liberal hotbed that sent packed Peace Trains to the New York demonstrations via New Jersey Transit; home of the Institute for Advanced Study, the Wilson School, Paul Krugman and Uwe Reinhardt. New Jersey has a liberal Democratic governor who supports human services, and two Democratic senators. Most of my local senior citizens' group actively support *The Nation*'s positions. What more can you ask?

LINDA G. GOCHFELD

GORE VIDAL, NATIONAL TREASURE

Huntington Beach, Calif.

■ Thank you for giving us more truths from Gore Vidal, in "*We* Are the Patriots" [June 2]. I feel a sense of moral vertigo when reading his analyses of the grotesque travesties of the military and corporate establishments, and the political transgressions and infringements, by both Democratic and Republican leaders, on our constitutional rights and freedoms.

Vidal is a political savant, with a tricksterlike knack for identifying mean, opportunistic and vulgar trends in American life. But like the positivist social archeologist he is, he finds some artifact in our collective past (like the words of the dying Benjamin Franklin) that reflects organic, timeless and universal vision and truth, refocusing our attention on the possibilities and promise of our people. G. CAJETAN LUNA

CORRECTIONS

In Peter Schrag's "Getting the Blues" [Aug. 4/11], control of the Senate changed hands in May 2001, not June; President Bush proposed $1 billion for his "No Child Left Behind" law, not $10 billion; and the study on perchlorate was by the Environmental *Working* Group.

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COMMENT

(Continued From Page 10)

for their suppliers—no harvesting of old-growth forest—the issue could no longer be ignored by the timber industry. This is a hard, long, messy way to change things, no question. Rainforest Action put the heat to Boise Cascade, a belligerent opponent of environmental regulation, and the company finally "capitulated" with a new policy statement. The commitment was bogus, RAN decided, and continued its organizing.

The McDonald's commitment is regarded as genuine, despite some obvious fudging, but only a first step too. The fast-food giant is already working with People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals to reform the ways in which animals are raised and slaughtered. One of the strong points in the McDonald's declaration is a commitment to continuous improvement and an auditing system of regular inspections that allows outside critics to judge for themselves whether the progress is real. The activist groups well understand that they can't walk away after the corporate press release. They have to stay on the case. This private process, despite the weaknesses, may be developing new models for how to achieve industrial change—perhaps a prototype for more effective regulation if government ever finds the will to act on these issues.

The notorious "hog factories" of capital-intensive agriculture are among the ripe targets for similar campaigns. Smithfield Foods, the largest pork producer, continues to gobble up other major companies, tightening the market noose around smaller independent farmers whose incomes have been devastated by the spread of the factory model for raising hogs. But Smithfield's many retail brand names are highly vulnerable, once consumers learn what they are buying with the bacon. The food we eat relies on extraordinarily inhumane methods that also sow destruction in surrounding environments while concentrating economic power in a handful of dominating corporations.

All these issues are the subject of contentious conflicts around the nation, especially in the farm states, yet the politics of food is not on the agenda of either major party. Does Ronald McDonald perhaps know something about Americans that the pollsters for Republicans and Democrats have overlooked? The explanation for their indifference is well understood. Both major parties (and most state governments) are fully aligned with the big names (and campaign contributors) of corporate agriculture. Most politicians embrace the industry's economics—the logic that says bigness is better—and pols typically hide behind the veil of "sound science," that is, industry claims that public complaints about health, environmental damage or the destruction of rural communities are mere sentiments.

Republicans are hopeless—no surprise. Some Democrats (including Representative Dennis Kucinich, a presidential candidate) do understand the centrality of food as a public concern—and recognize that the issue of food can unite people across the usual political divisions. A new presidential campaign is under way, and voters should listen carefully. Are any of these candidates brave enough to talk about hamburgers? WILLIAM GREIDER

National affairs correspondent William Greider discusses these issues in The Soul of Capitalism, *forthcoming from Simon & Schuster.*

Congress Rebuffs the FCC

The revolution may, in fact, be televised—and on C-Span, no less. The Congressional revolt against the Federal Communications Commission's loosening of media ownership rules has stunned a Bush Administration that is not used to facing bipartisan opposition on Capitol Hill. On July 23, in an unprecedented rebuff of big media's agenda, the House of Representatives voted 400 to 21 for an appropriations bill that includes language blocking implementation of a rule that would permit a single corporation to own television stations reaching 45 percent of Americans. Then, Democratic Senator Byron Dorgan announced that after the August Congressional recess, he will use a rare "Resolution of Disapproval" to force a Senate vote to reverse both the television ownership measure and a "cross-ownership" rule change that would allow one company to own the daily newspaper and most of the major television and radio stations in a single city.

"I do expect in the Senate there is a very powerful appetite to curb if not all, then certainly a significant part, of the rules the FCC has crafted," said Dorgan, whose co-sponsor is Republican Trent Lott. "The important thing here is to get this matter back at the FCC [and force the commission to] readdress it because there's strong feeling in the Congress, and I believe in the American people, that they did not handle these decisions correctly," declared Lott.

While conservative columnist William Safire still marvels at how he is lined up with Code Pink–Women for Peace in the fight with the FCC, it's a fact that opposition to media monopoly makes for strange bedfellows. Fear that a dumbed-down, one-size-fits-all media will stifle diversity linked the National Organization for Women, the National Rifle Association, Common Cause, media unions, minority journalists, musicians and hometown activists in a coalition that flooded the FCC with more than 2 million communications opposing the rules changes. And the ideological diversity of the grassroots opposition has been maintained as the issue has moved to Congress.

Despite presidential veto threats, Republicans in both chambers keep balking. Visits home in August should strengthen their resolve, as constituents vent frustrations with the excesses of the media giants. Even country singer Merle Haggard is on board, with a song, "That's the News," that bangs corporate media for echoing—rather than questioning—the President's spin on war with Iraq.

The next challenge is to get Democrats thinking bigger. An amendment by Representatives Maurice Hinchey and David Price to block the cross-ownership rule change failed when sixty House Democrats opposed it. Many said they feared that pushing too hard would provoke a Bush veto. But when Democrats are less willing to challenge the Administration than Trent Lott, they are becoming a too-loyal opposition. Instead of compromising, Congressional Democrats should follow the lead of Vermont Independent Bernie Sanders, who is promoting town-hall meetings across the country this summer to back not just a rollback of the FCC rule changes but a broader push to reassert public control of the public's airwaves. JOHN NICHOLS

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

Operation Iranian Freedom

Iran's brief experiment with democracy came to a tragic end, courtesy of Washington.

TARIQ ALI

ALL THE SHAH'S MEN: An American Coup and the Roots of Terror in the Middle East.
By Stephen Kinzer.
Wiley. 258 pp. $24.95.

In Washington, the hawks and vultures are beginning to gaze at Iran with greed-filled eyes. The British attack dog is barking and straining at the leash. And the Israeli ambassador to the United States has helpfully suggested that the onward march of the American Empire should not be brought to a premature halt in Baghdad. Teheran beckons, and then there is always Damascus. The only argument summoned by the blood-mottled "doves" is that the occupation of Iraq should be sufficient to bring the Iranian mullahs to heel. Naturally, this latter view does not satisfy the would-be Shah or his followers in Los Angeles. The Young Pretender is appearing regularly on the BBC and CNN these days, desperate to please and a bit too eager to mimic his father and grandfather. Might the empire put him back on the Peacock Throne? And, if so, how long would he last?

Neither party appears to be aware of all the recent traumas suffered by Iran or the fact that this is a nation and a people with a historical memory, something its poets have helped to preserve. But Iran has not forgotten that it was the United States and Britain that utilized king and cleric to bring about the regime change fifty years ago that destroyed Iran's fledgling democracy.

When Ahmad Shamlu—the most gifted of modern Iranian poets—died in 2000, more than 100,000 people, young and old, marched in dignified columns behind his funeral cortege while crowds lined the pavements to sing his poetry and emphasize that hope was still alive. At various times Shamlu, whose life mirrored the ups and downs of Iranian politics, had described his country as "a land where no birds sing, where spring never comes...a prison so huge that the soul weeps tears of shame at its own impotence."

Tariq Ali is the author, most recently, of The Clash of Fundamentalisms *(Verso).*

It was not always thus. There were short periods in the history of twentieth-century Iran when breakthroughs appeared possible. On each occasion the mass movements for change were either usurped or defeated. The Constitutional Revolution of 1906–11 shook the corrupt and degenerate Qajar dynasty, whose kings had virtually sold the country to the tobacco and oil interests of the British Empire. A parliament (Majlis) came into existence. It was accompanied in some regions by a peasant revolt against tax collectors and landlords, the only indigenous mainstay of the monarchy. Pro-democracy newspapers appeared, and Iranian intellectuals began to relish the modernist breezes blowing from Paris and Petrograd. Their relations with the clerics, some of whom had supported the constitutional upheaval, became increasingly tense.

Fifty years ago, Iran underwent CIA-sponsored 'regime change,' producing ruinous blowback for both Iran and the US.

The court exploited these divisions and after a few years monarchist landlords, courtiers and state bureaucrats effectively sidelined the revolutionary democrats in the Majlis.

Not everything remained the same, however. In 1910, a young mullah named Ahmad Kasravi observed Halley's comet from the roof of his house in Tabriz. He was seduced by the "star with a tail." His curious mind did not rest till he had understood the mysteries of the universe and embraced "godless science." Kasravi decided to enter the citadel of reason. His celebrated books and essays were carefully constructed polemics against ignorance and the Shiite orthodoxy that encouraged it. His plea for wide-ranging reforms (including rights for women) angered the clerics. The mullahs accused him of heresy and apostasy, and in 1946 he was brought to trial for "slandering Islam," but his detractors did not wait for the verdict. He was shot dead in open court, an early martyr in the struggle against obscurantism.

The Shah and his British advisers had crushed the Constitutional Revolution, but

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the death agony of the dynasty could not be long postponed. The last Shah of the Qajar dynasty was soon removed by a military coup led by Reza Khan, a semiliterate officer of an old Cossack regiment, which had been created by czarist Russia and officered by Russians to protect the Qajar ruler and Russian interests. Following the 1917 revolution, the regiment lost its officers, who were replaced by locals. In 1921 the Soviet government denounced the "tyrannical policy" of the czars, canceled the Persian debt and renounced all concessions and extraterritorial privileges that had been accorded to the *ancien régime*. These unilateral renunciations highlighted the imperial depredations of the British and encouraged nationalism even inside the old Cossack regiment. That same year Reza Khan marched his troops to Teheran and took control. He was appointed minister of war. Four years later, he ordered the Majlis to abolish the Qajar dynasty.

Reza had been inspired by the example of Kemal Atatürk in Turkey, who had foiled imperial designs and created a modern, independent state. But whereas Atatürk had abolished the Caliphate and declared Turkey a republic, his Persian impersonator, prone to flattery and corruption, had himself crowned king, with the hearty approval of the British. His halfhearted reforms were at best partial solutions that did little to alter the basically oppressive system. Reza antagonized the mullahs—who were sometimes publicly flogged—as well as the modernists. Like many dictators, he could read a subversive, antigovernment message in the most innocent of texts. Democratization was actively discouraged.

It was Reza's wartime fondness for the Third Reich (the country's name was changed from Persia to Iran on the suggestion of the embassy in Berlin, since Iran was "the birthplace of the Aryan race") that led to his downfall. Not unreasonably, the British found this inconvenient. In 1941 they dumped Reza Khan and sent him into exile. His incompetent and weak-minded son, Mohammad Reza, was put on the throne. The new boy-Shah never forgot what had been done to his father. He learned the lesson that the key to a satrap's success lay in never crossing swords with his patron.

The wartime occupation of Iran by Britain and the Soviet Union and their rivalry had created the space for the emergence of currents old and new: secular democratic nationalism and pro-Soviet Communism. The nationalists recalled the Constitutional Revolution and favored the immediate withdrawal of all the occupying armies and genuine political and economic independence for their country. Their leader, Mohammad Mossadegh, had, despite his birth (he was the son of a Qajar princess), always refused to do the bidding of the court. He resisted Reza Shah's autocracy, refusing to serve him in any capacity and suffering the consequences. Now, after the war, he fought for the independence of his country. For him this meant the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Iranian Azerbaijan and the nationalization of the British-owned Anglo-Iranian Oil Company.

The Communists of the Tudeh Party, for their part, while strongly opposed to the British presence, saw no contradiction between this and their blind defense of Soviet interests. Mossadegh alone stood for Iran, and many Tudeh members and supporters were compelled to back him. The political zigzags this entailed weakened the party's support in the population as a whole and its credibility among nationalist intellectuals. Despite this, the Tudeh Party continued to attract some of the finest intellectuals in Iran to its ranks.

Stephen Kinzer's new book, *All the Shah's Men*, is an ode to Mossadegh, the blue-blooded politician whose integrity, coupled with his dedication to the political and economic sovereignty of his country, won him the support of his people—especially the poor in town and country—and the enmity of two powers, the decaying British Empire and its upstart American rival and replacement. Not that the two shared common economic interests. As early as 1943, Secretary of State Cordell Hull was writing to Roosevelt that apart from the "humanitarian" reasons to counterbalance Soviet and British influence in the region, there was a "more directly selfish point of view," which meant that "no great power be established on the Persian Gulf opposite the American petroleum development in Saudi Arabia."

Accordingly, US military missions began to arrive in Iran from 1942 onward. The aim was clear: to transform Iran's ragtag army into a tough instrument that could

IN OUR ORBIT

In Dubious Battle

THE IRAQ WAR READER. By Micah L. Sifry and Christopher Cerf. Touchstone. 713 pp. $16.

American troops have been in Iraq since March, and their reception has been decidedly chillier than promised. Mass graves have been discovered, but not the sinister weapons of mass destruction that George W. Bush said could be launched against the United States within forty-five minutes. Resistance to America's presence is mounting, and it looks as though we'll be there for the foreseeable future, with or without the help of the United Nations. How did we come to such a pass?

The Iraq War Reader, edited by Micah L. Sifry and Christopher Cerf, provides an indispensable primer. In their last collaboration, *The Gulf War Reader* (Times Books), Sifry, a former editor at *The Nation*, and Cerf, a former Random House editor, lamented that "despite the flood of instant information and analysis provided by television...most Americans remain ill informed about the history of the region... and the complex problems that will shape the postwar Middle East." A great deal has changed in America's relationship to Iraq, but not, alas, this fact.

An anthology of essays, articles and speeches, *The Iraq War Reader* traces the roots of the Iraq crisis from the First World War to the present. The selections range in message and pitch, from Susan Sontag's controversial *New Yorker* piece "Reflections on September 11" to President Bush's 2002 "Axis of Evil" State of the Union address, from Anthony Lewis's thoughtful critique of anti-Arab prejudice, "First They Came for the Muslims...," to Ann Coulter's defense of anti-Arab prejudice, "Why We Hate Them." Although the book leans toward the left, including many regular *Nation* contributors—Jonathan Schell, Marc Cooper and Richard Falk—Sifry and Cerf take pains to present the views of prowar commentators. Among the most memorable contributions is an original essay on imperial overreach by Kevin Phillips, who warns that "God does not march under the American flag. We may come to regret pretending otherwise."

EMILY BIUSO

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defend imperial interests in the region. But there were two major imperial powers, and as British dependence on the United States grew with every passing month of the war, they had little option but to agree to the ever-increasing US presence that had penetrated Kurdistan and Azerbaijan as early as 1943.

Then, as now, rivalries between competing government departments in Washington sometimes hampered the overall project, but it was obvious to London that the United States would one day dominate Iran. (The single best account of US-Iranian relations remains James Bill's *The Eagle and the Lion: The Tragedy of American-Iranian Relations*, which should be required reading for Foggy Bottom.)

Mossadegh's stubborn nationalism ignited a mass mobilization that led to the flight of a frightened ruler in 1953 and the nationalization of an oil industry whose workers were treated like slaves. Kinzer (a longtime reporter for the *New York Times*) quotes an Israeli manager who worked alongside Iranian workers at the Abadan oil refinery and wrote in the *Jerusalem Post*:

> They lived during the seven hot months of the year under the trees.... In winter these masses moved into big halls, built by the company, housing up to 3,000-4,000 people without walls of partition between them. Each family occupied the space of a blanket. There were no lavatories.... In debates with British colleagues we often tried to show them the mistake they were making in treating the Persians the way they did. The answer was usually: "We English have had hundreds of years of experience on how to treat the Natives. Socialism is all right back home, but out here you have to be the master."

Labour imperialism has a long pedigree, even though these days socialism isn't all right even back home and there is, of course, a new master. Labour Foreign Secretary Herbert Morrison was determined to topple Mossadegh, but he was out of his depth. He assumed that gunboats and gurkhas would do the trick, but Harry Truman vetoed the adventure. His ambassador sent a dispatch arguing that Mossadegh "has the backing of 95 to 98 percent of the people of this country. It is utter folly to try to push him out."

It was only after the victory of Dwight Eisenhower that an agenda of permanent counterrevolution (the predecessor of the current National Security Strategy) was implemented by the Brothers Dulles, and only then did Operation Ajax get under way. The secular democracy instituted by Mossadegh's National Front was destabilized by British and American intelligence opera-

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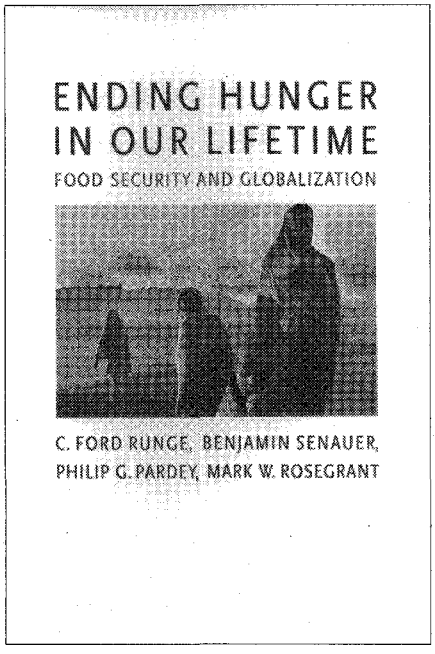
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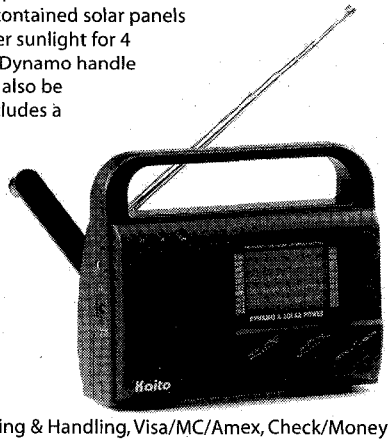

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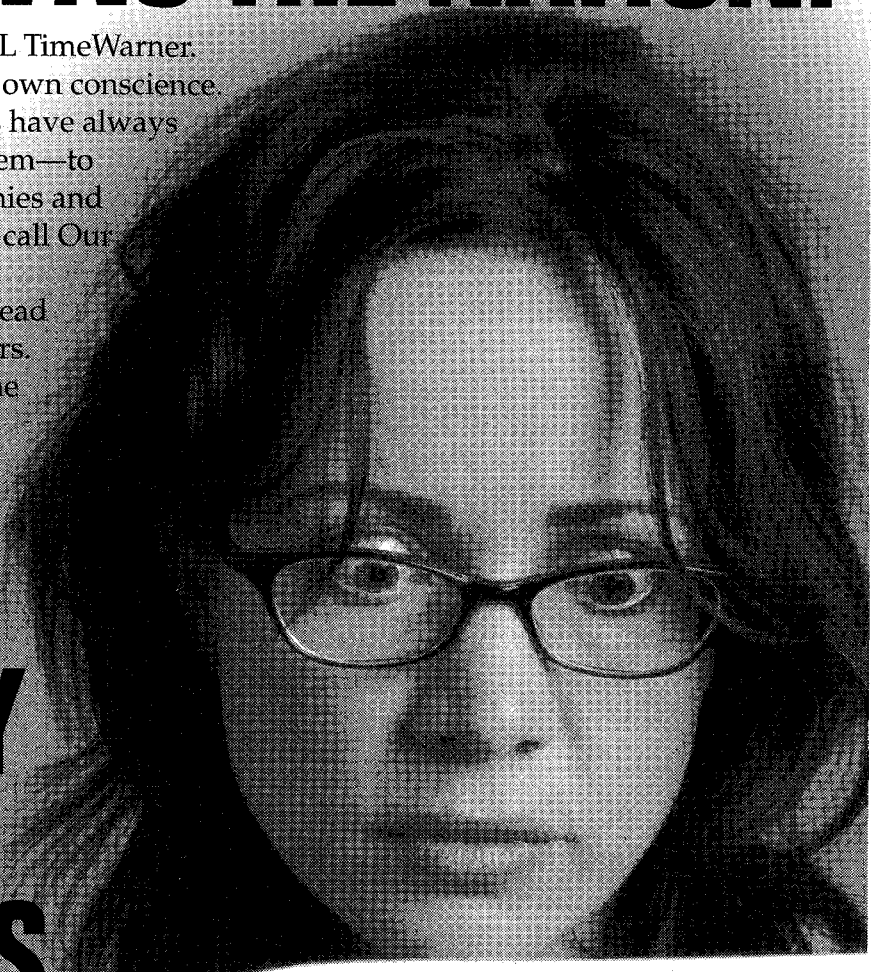

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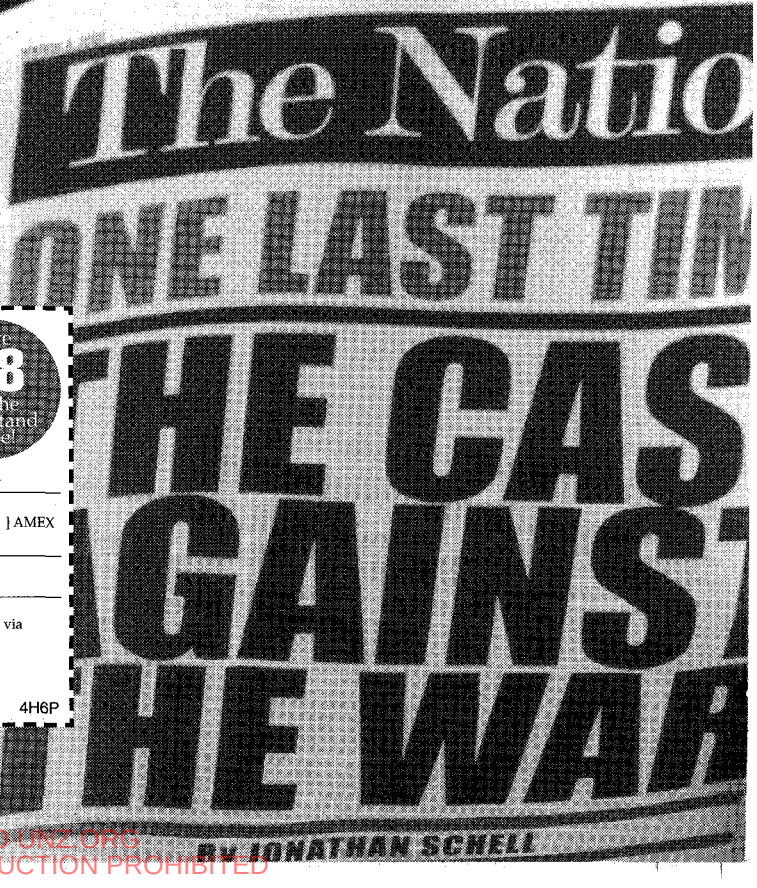

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tives. Kinzer has carefully reconstructed the entire operation, paying great attention to the details and the personalities of the principals. Much of what he writes was well established many years ago. What is remarkable is that nobody now bothers to deny what took place, leading one to ask whether it will be fifty years before we are told that both Bush and Blair knew perfectly well that Iraq did not possess any weapons of mass destruction. At one point Kinzer is mildly critical of Mossadegh for not appreciating American fears of the Soviet threat and reacting accordingly. This goes against the grain of the book. Mossadegh's argument in his own defense before the Shah's kangaroo court (quoted approvingly by Kinzer) invalidates any other justification: "My only crime is that I nationalized the Iranian oil industry and removed from this land the network of colonialism and the political and economic influence of the greatest empire on earth."

That is why the 1953 CIA coup put the Shah (who had fled to Rome) back on the throne. After his return he began a policy of systematic persecution of liberals, nationalists and Communists. His secret police, SAVAK, devised new forms of torture, and opposition politics was criminalized. A mass migration of sad and depressed intellectuals fled the country to organize resistance from Europe and North America. Inside Iran only the doors of the mosque remained open. Gradually the mosque became the only arena where opposition to the Shah could be discussed and organized. US backing for the Shah's dictatorship was complete, and even moderate oppositionists now became extremely hostile to Washington. In 1970, the poet Firaydun Tunakabuni expressed a near-universal view in *Memoirs of a Crowded City*:

> If I were a cartoonist, I would sketch the American in complete military uniform. He has one of his heavy, hobnailed boots on the back of Latin America while the other boot stands on the back of Southeast Asia. His left hand has a black man by the throat....

When the storm finally arose and swept aside the Shah, it was the ayatollahs who took control. They had profited from the vacuum created in 1953. The clerical dictatorship that Khomeini imposed on his country turned out to be every bit as repressive as that of the Shah. The anti-imperialism of the mullahs was always the anti-imperialism of fools. The vision they offered was blurred from the beginning. The differences between Baathist and clerical repression are instructive. Although Saddam crushed all political opposition (liberal, Communist and especially religious), he did not interfere with the everyday life of Iraqis. During the past quarter-century, bars, discotheques and theaters sprouted all over Baghdad. The mullahs attempted to control every aspect of life. The religious police kept a permanent watch on young people, punishing infringements with fines, floggings or prison. This blanket cultural oppression turned large numbers of young people against the regime. Today there is a genuine hatred of the mullahs on the part of a majority of the population (60 percent of whom are under 25 years old), which has known only clerical rule.

Experience, the best of teachers, has educated the people of Iran. Not even all-powerful ayatollahs can override the laws of biology. If left alone the Iranians will get rid of their bearded oppressors in their own way and in their own time. It might even be the dawn of an Islamic Reformation. Certainly the vibrancy of the country's filmmakers and the clandestine poems and texts that are being circulated are an indication of the change that lies ahead. If the Bush/Cheney/Rumsfeld team decides to speed up the process, it's all but certain to create a giant mess that will only strengthen the most backward elements in the country. The interests of the empire rarely coincide with those of the people it is intending to "liberate," especially when the people know that one reason they are in a mess is because of what the empire did in its own interests fifty years ago. ■

Soul Man

ARMOND WHITE

BOOGALOO: The Quintessence of American Popular Music.
By Arthur Kempton. Pantheon. 512 pp. $27.50.

Pop music's eternal appeal can be found in one instance out of many: "This Magic Moment," a 1960 song by The Drifters. "Everything I want I have/ Whenever I hold you tight." The emotion expressed in that line doesn't simply overlook politics but, through the calm deliberation of personal sentiment, transcends politics. This artistic strategy is itself a political act (even if subconscious). Such transcendence was once commonly understood and implicitly endorsed by the way African-Americans embraced soaring European violins and swirling piano flourishes in the same era in which they waged the civil rights struggle. Amiri Baraka explained what was special—and forceful—in pop when he described how it began to "flow just as many Afro-American artists and intellectuals had reached a more resolute and practical understanding." Social historians seldom deal with the part of the black experience that transmutes the daily ordeal of segregation, oppression and hardship into salvific forms, but it is a truth that any worthwhile pop-music scholar must confront.

Few have attempted this insight into the paradox of pop, a music that manages to be at once soothing and revolutionary, as well as Arthur Kempton in *Boogaloo: The Quintessence of American Popular Music*. Moving through the history of black pop from the earliest blues recordings to contemporary hip-hop, Kempton's opening chapters are unusually satisfying as a selective chronology that is also a tribute to artists who struggled with social obstacles more difficult than an elusive muse. There's romance in Kempton's tale, but like the gospel and r&b that inspire him, this cultural appreciation is informed by an awareness that even the most intimate feelings can reflect some larger social meaning. His book is distinguished by a fan's deep understanding, and by an unusual familiarity with the culture's lingua franca. Even the best white scholars of black pop—Charles Shaar Murray, Peter Guralnick, Gerri Hirshey—have displayed a journalistic formality in their accounts. Kempton, by contrast, has dared inhale the culture's thought and attitude in authentic dialect and phrases: "upsouth," "grown children" (aged offspring still under parental authority), "country and uncool," "stealing from the building fund," "a rock in a weary land."

Kempton views black pop history as a self-conscious movement rather than a happy accident with sociological aftershocks, the standard notion of stingy pop critics who present black musicians as unsophisticated folk lacking social aware-

Armond White, a film critic for the New York Press, *is the author of* Rebel for the Hell of It: The Life of Tupac Shakur *(Quartet).*

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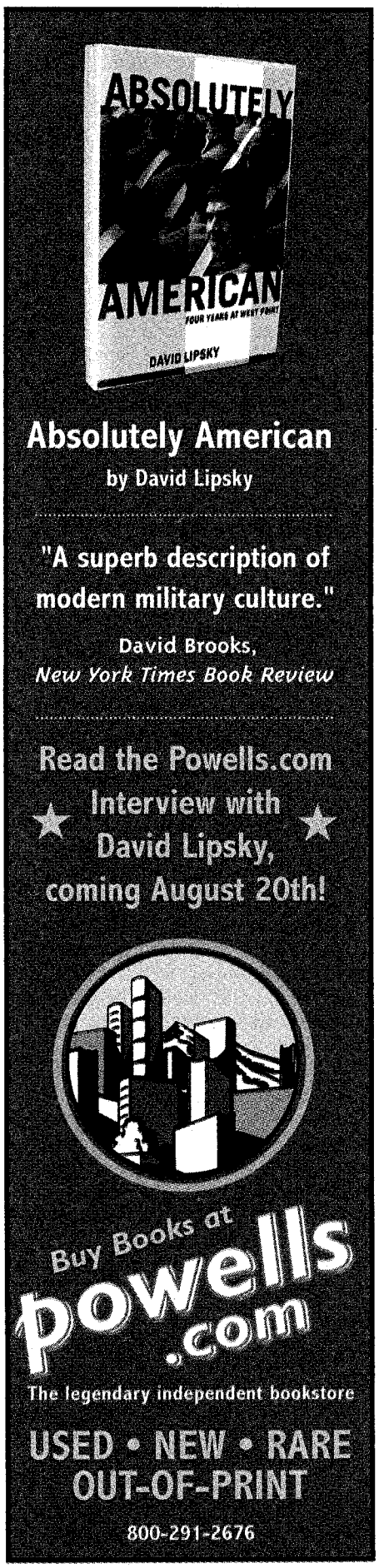

ness. As he points out, black popular music, from blues to gospel, from soul to hip-hop, has consistently drawn upon the experiences, longings and vision of outsiders—or, as he calls them, "outcastes." Moving in on a restricted, hostile, supposedly democratic society with powerful tales of their innermost feelings, "outcastes" like Bessie Smith, Mahalia Jackson and Sam Cooke have not only changed popular perceptions of black folks around the world; they have also transformed our perception of what America could be. *Boogaloo* is best when Kempton writes about these outcastes, who changed their circumstances and improved the lives of people who bore witness to their struggle.

The story of black music in the twentieth century is, in large part, a story of the Great Migration from the South. The early twentieth-century migrants, Kempton observes, "usually came hopeful, preferring to believe that in their new place social acceptance was a promise social acceptability would guarantee, and so were attracted to the culture of optimism they found in the churches strivers had made." Politics, music and the church were the pillars of black social progress. The line between the secular and sacred forms of expression was often hard to identify: Many of Kempton's subjects, from Thomas Dorsey to Sam Cooke, frequently alternated between gospel and blues. Kempton's description of this ambivalence is a crucial addition to contemporary cultural understanding. He cites the

> sensibilities of Afro Christians, whose tradition encourages in its adherents a personal relationship with Jesus and a collective identification with Old Testament Jews...the state of tribal affairs is allegorized in the story of Job, and its affairs of state in the bondage of the Israelites and their deliverance out of Egypt.

The religious and political bond between Afro-Christianity and Judaism—a two-way practice of each sect's identification and empathy with the other—anchored the century's longest sustained movement of American social progress, as well as some of the twentieth century's most fertile artistic movements (from the Harlem Renaissance to Broadway). Musically, that bond was expressed in what Kempton calls "gospel blues." A music of belief and struggle, of realism and feeling, gospel blues distinguished the new century's pop from banal entertainment.

The founder of gospel blues was Thomas Dorsey (1899–1993), whom Kempton compares favorably to Irving Berlin and Harold Arlen. The so-called Father of Gospel Music (best known for writing "Precious Lord"), Dorsey struggled with the tenets of his religious faith and the pressures of the early music market—a sacred/profane, personal/public schism with which every black American pop musician after him would have to reckon. In Kempton's view, Dorsey's "great accomplishment" was to make "'precious Lord, take my hand' feel the same as 'baby, please don't go.'" Dorsey, the believer and the artist, provides a worthy foil to Stagolee, the carouser, brawler and killer who has haunted far too many accounts of black

EDEL RODRIGUEZ

pop. Dorsey's struggle to balance the church with the street—he wrote songs for blues singers (most famously Ma Rainey) as well as for church testifiers—demonstrates a more complicated Afro-American lifestyle than most historians ever envision.

Kempton's other key figure is Sam Cooke, who, like Dorsey, alternated his gospel foundations with his pop-romantic ambitions. "What he came upon as the blackest of popular music," Kempton says of the writer-crooner-entrepreneur, "Cook made into something more conforming to the specifications of his talent." He sees Cook (his christened name before he added the showbiz "e") not just as a performer but as a cultural figure who embodied midcentury social progress. When Cooke left gospel behind in the mid-1950s to make a career for himself as a secular artist, his decision had ramifications far beyond the black community. "What the church audience had identified in [Cooke's] voice as hope and uplift, white adolescents heard as winsome and youthful, and they were drawn, too," Kempton writes.

Nothing has changed in show business since then, but Kempton is one of the rare writers to indicate this truth about the pop and racial circumstance in which artists consciously share "the brunt of polite so-

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ciety's scorn." While hip-hop has made black artists' celebrity (scorn as identity) seem normal, Kempton's history exposes that condescending view as an aberration that belittles the most ardent black artistic and social struggle—it's among the casual indignities that black artists frequently suffer for the sake of "acceptance." Kempton conveys the full cost of this humiliation when he characterizes Sam Cooke as his tribe's "surrogate voyager: his origins like theirs; his early encounters with official white culture as awkward as their own; his provisional acceptance by it grounds for their optimism."

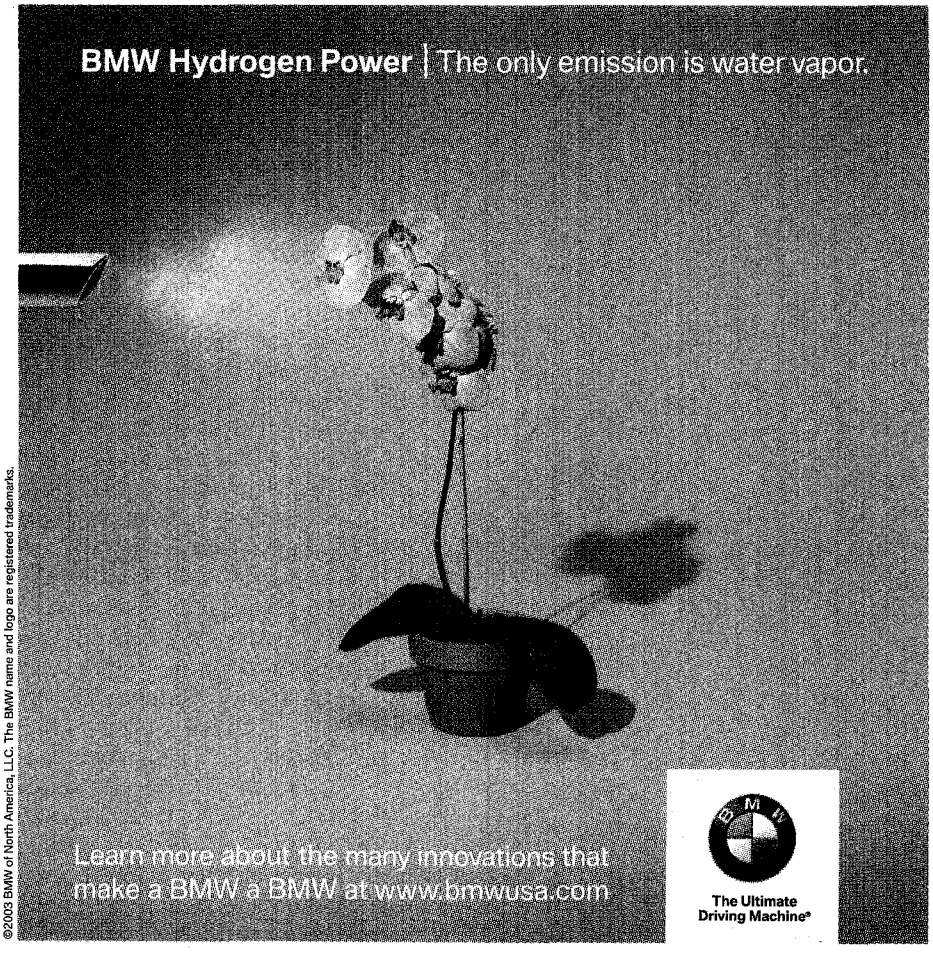
Strangely, midway through this radical, necessary, sympathetic history, Kempton changes his approach. After his rapturous appraisal of Sam Cooke's 1950s–'60s ascension—opening up white Americans to the most elegant entreaties of black artists, braving the financial skulduggery of Allen Klein, establishing black pop's "lighter touch" as opposed to gutbucket naturalism—Kempton staggers upon the next phase of black pop music's social trajectory, at Motown. Hindsight gets in the way of Kempton's insight. This section of *Boogaloo* amounts to an excoriation of Motown founder Berry Gordy as a black businessman who continued the plantation practices with which white music-industry players had plagued black artists. Whatever truth there is in Kempton's denunciation, he loses his grasp on the emotional texture of black pop that makes his Dorsey and Cooke chapters so compelling.

It was at Motown that black producers, composers, musicians and singers extended the civil rights voice of American aspiration. Kempton refers to the unparalleled beauty and success of the Temptations' "My Girl," quoting the line "I've got sunshine on a cloudy day" (one of writer William "Smokey" Robinson's most trenchant ironies), but it's an obvious, long-accepted point. Kempton might have quoted "I don't need no money, fortune or fame/I got all the riches, baby/One man can claim." That part of the song's lyric shows how Motown explicitly recast the values of the civil rights era from economics to personal (soulful) fulfillment.

In his attack on Berry Gordy's greed and entrepreneurial ruthlessness, Kempton ignores Motown's remarkable development of a modern, upwardly mobile, integrationist black imperative, which Suzanne Smith describes so well in her book *Dancing in the Street*. As though fearful of falling into *Big Chill* inanity and boomer condescension (remember the sight of Kevin Kline hugging the Temptations *Anthology* LP to his chest?), Kempton gives short shrift to the eloquence of Motown's output; he even seems to forget the yearnings for acceptance that he movingly ascribed to earlier black artists who no doubt influenced Gordy's (admittedly selfish) mission.

Although Kempton rightly credits Gordy's pop intuition—he famously instructed his minions, "Send the tune out with the hook"—he fails to understand the political brilliance of the Motown method. Proclaiming itself "The Sound of Young America," this small black record company represented an extraordinary expression of Great Society ambition, and it made good on that boast through large sales and global recognition. Kempton also castigates Motown's assimilationist moves into nightclubs and TV specials, overlooking the import of Motown's sound being emulated throughout the world record industry—a phenomenon that proves social status might be attained through cultural impact. As Kempton himself acknowledges, even Gordy's exploited workers held on to a faith that "was fed by the ever-more-frequent appearance of signs that Gordy really had found the path of their deliverance from Black Bottom into a state of prosperity appropriate to home-owning in the exclusive preserve of Sherwood Forest, Detroit's highest cotton." It's the essence of faith in American success and social acceptance, but Kempton seems to lose track of that theme, forgetting the meaning of the very term "faith," which connects Gordy to the church-based aesthetic of Dorsey and Cooke. This "faith" was grounded in the conviction that achievement, acceptance and equality could be found through perseverance—just like spiritual salvation.

Instead, Kempton becomes contemptuous, switching from religious terms to the terms and credos of pimps to describe the black artist's struggle. He cites the 1960s vogue for the pulp novelist Iceberg Slim (a guttersnipe alternative to Motown uplift) as the model for Gordy's boss-man mentality. "Gordy slapped [Marvin] Gaye's face one night at the Twenty Grand when the singer, wracked with anxiety about going onstage, dithered too long in his dressing room. ('The show can't stop when a whore bleeds')." That Slim quote (and Kempton includes many others in place of accurate reporting) is a bad strategy, as well as a morally questionable analogy. Kempton also falls for the typical disparagement of Motown as an inauthentic black expression, slamming Diana Ross particularly hard even though her piquant sound was one of the distinctive, undeniable voices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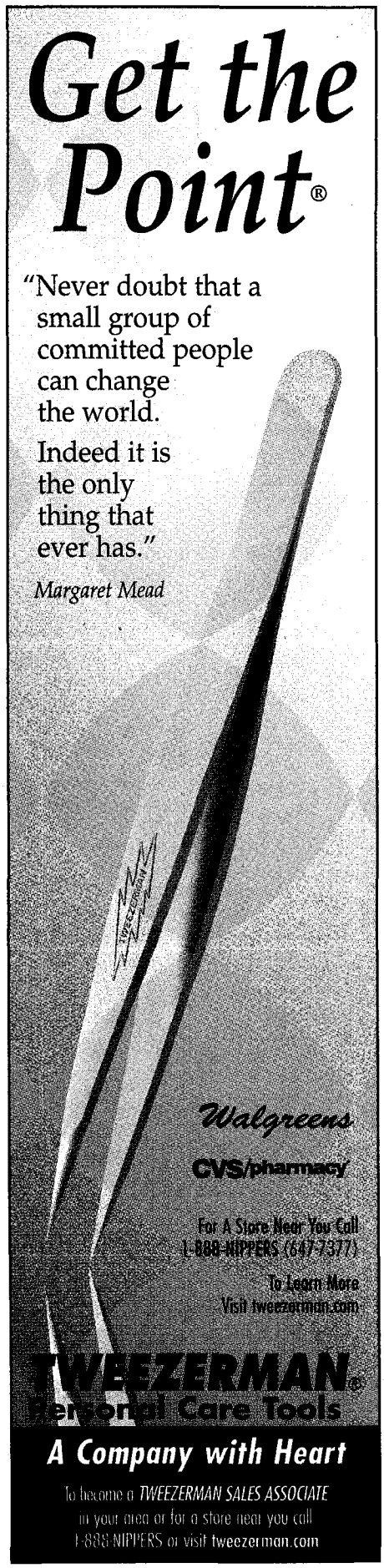
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of aspiration and willed social transcendence. Most predictable, Kempton prefers Motown's chief competitor, the Memphis-based Stax Records, which specialized in the less refined vocal and musical styles of black Southerners. This simplistic dichotomy between "gutbucket" and urbane pop, common among racist pop critics, contradicts Kempton's earlier sensitivity.

Rather than explain why the "I don't need no money" lyric from "My Girl" became a more resonant cry than Barrett Strong's 1960 "Money (That's What I Want)" (the 45 disc that initiated Motown's fortunes), Kempton concentrates, instead, on the "nigrabusiness." Kempton's about-face in focus (from artists to businessmen) suggests a collapse of his own pop faith. The well-known story of music-industry failure is less instructive than the ability of artists to maintain their social vision within the context of entertainment and as part of the tradition of gospel and blues that expressed black folks' awareness of their social conditions and political objectives. Businessmen routinely cheat artists, but Hemingway's art is more significant than the deal he cut with Scribner's. Motown artists deserve credit for the social vision they cut into vinyl. Unfortunately, Kempton seems less interested in what's said/sung on Motown records than in what happened in its executive offices.

The latter chapters, compressing James Brown, George Clinton, Suge Knight, Dr. Dre and Tupac Shakur, are a shambles. It's as if some editor told Kempton to make it *au courant*—lambasting gun-toting "nigrabusiness" rather than staying true to his meticulous account of conscientious black creativity. It's fine to tell the story of Stax's mismanagement, in which "the company was surrendering master tapes to artists and producers in lieu of unpaid royalties," but Kempton seems mindless of the resonance of that mythic term "master tapes" (and he doesn't specify to whom which tapes were released). The struggle for control over black pop music is an issue about which contemporary black musicians have been highly vocal. But Kempton leaves out their plight—the perseverance of the businessman-artist who has fully and unapologetically taken on the issues of ownership, self-sufficiency, racism and artistry.

The progression of his narrative is all wrong; it should go from Dorsey and Cooke to Marvin Gaye, Curtis Mayfield, Al Green, Prince, Michael Jackson, Public Enemy and Jay-Z. These artists consistently show how black popular music is the quintessence of the endeavor by African-American artists (Kempton prefers the term "Aframerican") to convey their experience to the world—and assert their economic independence. Kempton's concentration on the derelictions of Dr. Dre, Tupac Shakur and Suge Knight—they compose what he calls "the twilight of Boogaloo's last age"—is misleading and unnecessarily defeatist. When Kempton finally gets around to identifying what he means by the suspicious term "Boogaloo" (the name of a 1960s-era dance), simply defining it as "black popular music," it turns out to be a tautology in boldface.

The best parts of *Boogaloo* are forward-thinking, even inspired, but its failures are proof that the prejudices surrounding black creativity—which extend from the profit-robbing executive deals to the decades of fraudulent chart-making—are not easily fought even by an enthusiast as shrewd as Kempton. It's a huge undertaking, and Kempton's personal biases (his preference for Southern, older forms) are perhaps to be expected. But that's probably what prevents him from explaining hip-hop as well as he does the fondly recalled achievements of early blues and midcentury r&b. His simplistic dismissal of gangsta rap opponent C. DeLores Tucker is unfortunate, since Kempton himself seems clueless about the current era of black pop, which is undeniably, complicatedly political. (In a typically fluid passage comparing Tucker to the maternal/historical figure of Mary McLeod Bethune, he seems unaware of the totemic use Public Enemy made of Bethune in the track "Revolutionary Generation"—a song with direct links to the church-and-showbiz tradition that Kempton found in Thomas Dorsey.)

In his nostalgia for black pop's advancement through the first half of the twentieth century, Kempton neglects the aspiration and innovation that underscore the continuity between black pop styles of every decade. His closing chapters show an unexpected capitulation to the conventional dismissal of black pop's seriousness. Kempton winds up taking the recent state of black pop as evidence of the culture's social decline when, in fact, the proliferation of hits by black artists shows the culture's ability to revive itself artistically, spiritually and politically. Performers from Missy Elliott and Nelly to Jay-Z and Pharrell (including a multiculti "brother" like Justin Timberlake, who has collaborated with several of them, sharing the lingua franca of black pop) carry on the tradition of rich articulation that drew Kempton to black folks' music in the first place. Kempton's search for a new black-pop archetype and for a

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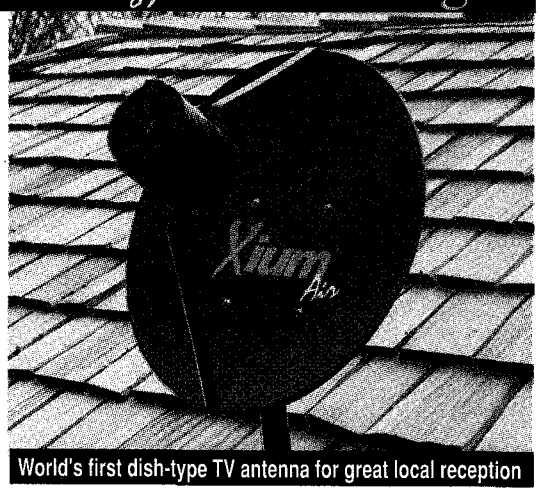

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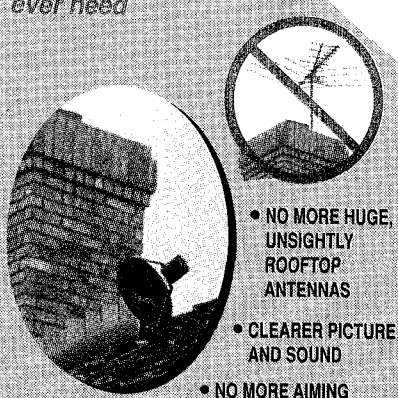

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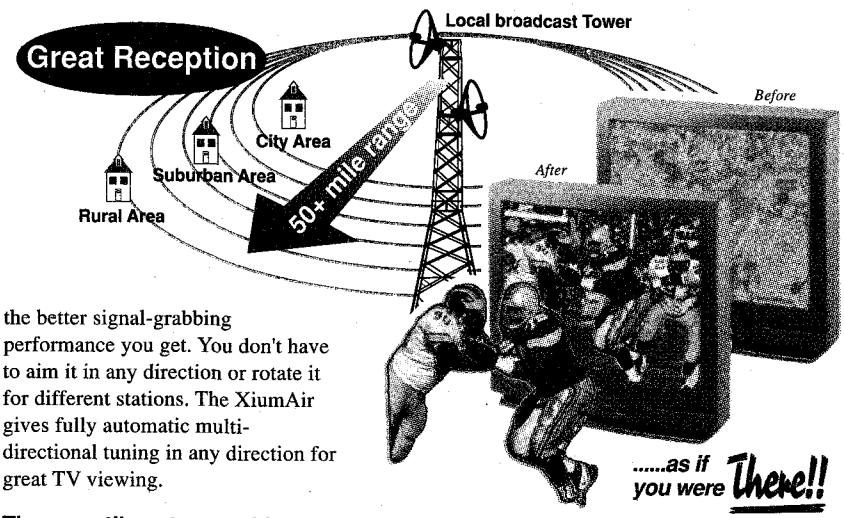

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new model of artistic and political appreciation wins a faithful reader's gratitude while falling short of gaining admiration. You have to give credit to a white critic who knows the sentimental value of a forgotten hit like "Michael the Lover," but Kempton's own sentimental love of bygone black pop prevents him from fully appreciating the political essence of what's on the airwaves today. ■

Thieves Like Us

AMITAVA KUMAR

BUNKER 13: A Novel. By Aniruddha Bahal. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 345 pp. $24.

In March 2001 a small Internet website in Delhi, tehelka.com, revealed that two of its reporters had used a secret camera to tape senior defense officials and political leaders accepting bribes. Over a period of eight months, the reporters had posed as arms dealers for a fake company called Operation Westend. The broadcast of their tapes on Indian television resulted in a number of resignations, as well as the arrest of people at the top of the ruling establishment. But for ordinary viewers the footage performed a more commonplace function: showing exactly how their politicians did business. The news was oddly reassuring: By confirming the worst suspicions of the Indian public, the tapes restored their sense of the world.

The bribes that had been paid by the two reporters weren't huge. The president of the party in power, the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party, was seen accepting a stash of rupee notes worth about $2,000, while a senior army officer pocketed the equivalent of $400. A major general, for his part, told the reporters not to come to his house without a bottle of Johnny Walker Blue Label. Still, as paltry as the pay-offs were, the scandal exposed the hollowness of the ruling party's nationalist rhetoric. The nationalism that had brought the middle class to power, it turned out, was being used to rule the poor and to make a few extra bucks on the sly. The scandal had other, unintended consequences. While laying bare the venality of the middle classes, it may also have given many Indians a sudden sense of potency. Although a part of this response reflected a sense of pride in the emergence of a new, aggressive kind of journalism, there was also something darker there. For the tapes had pointed the way to participation in the world's largest democracy. You too could be a player in the corridors of power—if you had a few dollars in your briefcase and a set of suitable fictions.

Amitava Kumar is the editor of World Bank Literature *(Minnesota) and the author of* Bombay-London-New York *(Routledge).*

The fictional element was an important part of the presentation. The reporters in the defense scam had managed to sell to the Indian Army hand-held thermal imaging binoculars. These objects did not exist but they had a name that had come from Joseph Heller's *Catch-22*. In the novel, a drunken Yossarian had kidded Colonel Korn by talking about the new Lepage gun being used by the Germans. "What Lepage gun?" the colonel had asked. "The new three-hundred-and-forty-millimeter Lepage glue gun," Yossarian had said. "It glues a whole formation of planes together in mid-air." In homage to Heller, Aniruddha Bahal, one of the reporters leading the investigation for tehelka.com, gave the name Lepage 90 to the nonexistent piece of equipment that he was hawking. Bahal has just published *Bunker 13*, a racy piece of fiction about a journalist with a taste for drugs and sex whose beat covers the secret operations of the Indian Army.

The first word of *Bunker 13* is "You." As in, "You have soldiering boots stuck between your teeth so you don't maul your tongue." The entire novel is narrated from the point of view of this "you," who is also identified as MM, or Minty Mehta, a journalist with a Delhi paper called *The Post*. He has a worldly voice, knowing, garrulous, generous with information: "The thing about jumping, you remember, is to go out with a thrust. That stops the slipstream from getting a hold over you and banging you against the AN-32 body, loading your face full of aluminum rivets."

This can be useful in case you were thinking of jumping with an elite corps of paratroopers—after having sniffed neat lines of coke from the mirror in your shaving kit. Of course, having been put in that position by the "you" who is speaking about himself, you realize that you are already supposed to know all this. The fact that you don't is what gives you a rush. Nor, if you are a literary-minded homebody, will you ever inject the heroin that MM calls "the Afghan soldiers" into your bloodstream while taking your time pulling the cord on your parachute. But the fact that you learn about others who do, and also, in the process, about the corruption that is rife in the armed forces, is enough to make you feel lightheaded and gay.

MM makes swift incursions into Kashmir, a land crawling with Muslim terrorists—his charming word for them, apparently shared by much of the Indian Army, is Mossies—but finds time to get high and then have sex with a visiting female reporter from the *Times* of London. There are more serious revelations in the pages that follow, revelations about the elaborate arms-smuggling racket and the military's rampant skulduggery. Although the reader is propelled forward purely by the plot, there are small moments when the narrative snags on something more human and meaningful. In a brief but disturbing scene involving a rape by army soldiers in a Kashmiri village, for instance, Bahal uses sharp observation rather than insipid moralism to describe violence—an effective technique.

MM, Bahal's antihero, has no patience for moralism. Like the men he's paid to investigate, he's in it mostly for the money. He listens to a confessional speech by a corrupt colonel, a speech that has a ring of truth to it, and says the words work "like a syringe of steroids straight in his larynx." This is what the colonel says:

> The army, MM, fights at the company level on personal bonds. Flimsy constructs like nationalism mean nothing to us. You hit at that bond and you have a bunch of angry men to deal with, who suddenly go about asking themselves what all this rigmarole is about. Why do they have to risk their lives for a nation that's insulated to their hardships? Who's skimming the milk and where's their share of the cream? It's certainly more than the basic two thousand rupees take-home plus C-grade rations that include eight eggs a week. Would you risk even a single finger for that, MM?

This is a speech, it seems, that Bahal has heard before. Several pages later, MM is told by a major of the booty he can smuggle: thousands of rifles, ammunition, grenade launchers, five Stinger anti-aircraft missiles and a massive load of heroin. MM whistles with pleasure. "Major," he says, "you are talking big league. You are talking my language. We could take over Africa with that kind of stuff."

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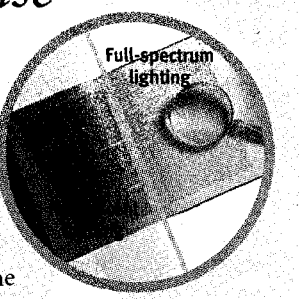

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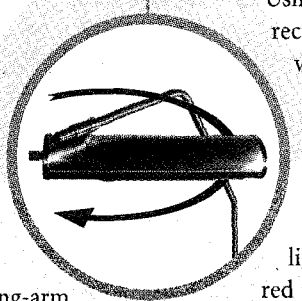

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Who is MM and why is he ready to take over the world? The answer to that question is provided by the rest of the book. This includes the generic convention of the surprise ending. It is a bold but disappointing answer—provided in a body bag that has been stitched with the kind of ideological certainties that Bahal had initially seemed to be writing against.

Yet the book's gift is greater than its conclusion, or the plotting that stretches plausibility almost to the breaking point. *Bunker 13* gives flesh and blood to the ingenuity and rapacity of India's new entrepreneurial class. Writers and journalists aren't exempt either. The novel shows that the desire to find and tell the truth is only a move in a high-risk gamble. It follows that there is also a sinister side to MM. At his most chilling, he reminds you of his more modest cousins who have been in the news—those affluent Hindus who took directions on their cell phones and arrived in their SUVs, during the riots in Gujarat last year, to loot the shops owned by Muslims.

MM also resembles other subjects of Bahal's reporting. In the early 1990s, when heavy betting on cricket matches became a subcontinental trend, Bahal broke the story on match-fixing in India. As a result, the intelligence authorities uncovered an illegal business that, for its most successful bookie, was generating at least $40 million in turnover for each game. In an interview, Bahal explained that the bookies always go for the best players, "not just because they can influence the match, but because the best players also have a higher risk-taking psychology." The players, he added, were often also heavy gamblers themselves. "It is the way they are wound up. It gives a kick."

I thought of those words while reading *Bunker 13*. MM has an unsentimental grasp of money and markets. It is impossible to inhabit his world and not know that writing in India is also now a game of high commercial stakes, reflecting broader changes within the national culture. The staid world of Nehruvian socialism and protected markets is gone. The Indian nation, and indeed much of the world outside, is up for grabs.

When the defense scam erupted in the news in India, Bahal wrote an op-ed in a newsweekly saying that his team's aim wasn't to change the system: "That wouldn't be a fun position." There was, he said, another reason for writing his exposé. Noting that he was from a small town, he said, "I realized very early that even the powerful pull down their zippers to piss." I liked the nakedness of that metaphor. *Bunker 13* spreads the guilt more evenly. Everyone is suspect in the book because everyone is on the take. It's refreshing to find early on that the journalist is a crook—and the book's charm comes from having a narrator who is compromised in more ways than one. At the end, you are almost tempted to forgive Bahal for finding a criminal who, it turns out, is not at all like you and me. The middle-class nation can go about its business in peace again. ■

ART

Paint It Black

ARTHUR C. DANTO

KAZIMIR MALEVICH

If the idea of monochrome painting occurred to anyone before the twentieth century, it would have been understood as a picture of a monochrome reality, and probably taken as a joke. Hegel likened the Absolute in Schelling to a dark night in which all cows are black, so a clever student in Jena might have had the bright idea of painting an all-black picture titled *Absolute With Cows*—witty or profound depending upon one's metaphysics. In 1882 the Exposition des Arts Incohérents in Paris featured a black painting by the poet Paul Bilhaud titled *Combat de nègres dans une cave pendant la nuit*, which was appropriated in 1887 by the French humorist Alphonse Allais, in an album of monochrome pictures of various colors, with uniformly ornamental frames, each bearing a comical title. Allais called his all-red painting *Tomato Harvest by Apoplectic Cardinals on the Shore of the Red Sea*.

Only in the most external and superficial respect does Kazimir Malevich's 1915 black square painted on a white ground belong to this history. For one thing, *Black Square* is not a picture; it does not, in other words, depict a black square outside the frame. One of its immense contributions to the concept of visual art lies in the fact that it liberated the concept of painting from that of picturing, and thus opened up a new era in the history of art. "All paintings are pictures" would have been a strong candidate for a necessary truth until Malevich proved it false. But it was not a difference that met the eye. Had Bilhaud's all-black painting of 1882 been square, it might have looked exactly like Malevich's *Black Square*.

Black Square's radical difference from everything before it does not end there. Malevich's disciple, El Lissitzky, declared in 1922 that *Black Square* was "opposed to everything that was understood by 'pictures' or 'paintings' or 'art.' Its creator intended to reduce all forms, all painting, to zero." I think by its opposition to painting, El Lissitzky is saying that the fact that the square is painted is incidental to the work's meaning. Malevich himself said later, "It is not painting; it is something else." And so far as its opposition to art goes, well, you don't have to study art to be able to paint a black square. Anybody could do it. So though it was almost certainly Malevich's most important work, and inaugurated a new era in the history of art, it hardly seems appropriate to call it his masterpiece, just because the factors that make for something being a masterpiece don't really apply to it. It would be curious to think of it exhibited alongside *Mona Lisa* in a show called "Two Masterpieces." We marvel at its originality, not its painterly brilliance.

The idea behind what Malevich called Suprematism is that you cannot carry things beyond *Black Square*. It is as far as you can go: You have reached a point of absolute zero. Which isn't to say that *Black Square* is empty—there is, after all, a difference between not being a picture and being a picture of nothing! Calling an empty rectangle a picture of nothing would be a Lewis Carroll–like joke, whereas everything connected with *Black Square* underscores its seriousness.

Consider, for example, the way Malevich first showed it in the 1915 show "0.10. The Last Futurist Exhibition of Paintings," to which he contributed thirty-nine Suprematist works. An installation photograph shows *Black Square* mounted in an upper corner of the gallery, diagonally connecting two walls. This was evidently the position occupied by an icon in Russia: not hung on a wall or propped on a shelf, but in an upper corner. I think the reason would be as follows: Icons were never considered mere pictures of saints, the Madonna or Jesus himself, so they did not aspire to create an

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illusion, as in Renaissance art. They were not, as Alberti said, a kind of window, through which one would believe one was seeing an external reality. What one believed instead was that holy beings would actually make themselves present in their images. Theoreticians spoke of the mystical presence of the saint in the icon. And its placement near the ceiling was an obvious metaphorical entry point for beings that existed on a higher plane. A picture could be a decoration, but icons were fraught with magic. Through icons, the holy being was in our very presence, where it could be prayed to or honored. Trivially, a square is a square, not a picture of one. Malevich created reality, rather than merely depicting it. And that in a sense is what the figure in an icon was believed to be—a reality rather than a picture.

After Malevich's death, when he lay in state, a black square hung above his head. There was a black square on his tomb. As a kind of icon, it carried a religious power. In 1920, he wrote, "I had an idea that were humanity to draw an image of the Divinity after its own image, perhaps the black square is the image of God as the essence of his perfection on a new path for today's fresh beginning." He clearly identified himself with the black square: It served him as a kind of signature, appearing in the lower right-hand corner of his last painting, a self-portrait. In any case, it was not a proto-Dadaist hoot.

The original *Black Square* is perhaps the *pièce de résistance* in an elegant exhibition at the Guggenheim Museum given over entirely to Malevich's Suprematist phase (until September 14; Menil Collection, Houston, October 3–January 11, 2004). It is the first time it has been allowed to travel, and one can see why. It's in terrible shape, so blemished by cracks and fissures that one would give it a pass at a yard sale. Its ravaged condition conveys a sense of touching vulnerability, like a martyr's relic. In fact, Malevich painted at least four *Black Squares*, and it occurs as a motif throughout his *oeuvre*, making its first appearance in 1913, in a small pencil study for the décor of the Futurist opera *Victory Over the Sun*, two years before he invented—or discovered—Suprematism.

There are several of these studies in the Guggenheim show, in deference to Malevich's belief that they are proto-Suprematist works, though at the time he considered himself a Cubo-Futurist. After Cubo-Futurism, he went through a related style, making what he described as "alogical" or "transrational" works, hardly a year before the great breakthrough that *Black Square* represents. I wish I knew more about the moment when Malevich decided to paint a large black square, and realized that he had hit upon something that changed the meaning of art forever, not merely purging it of any pictorial elements but stultifying the impulse to see it as a picture of unrelieved blackness. Given the momentousness he ascribed to Suprematism, one can appreciate that Malevich looked for intimations of it in his earlier work, much in the way in which scholars pore over Pollock's pre-1945 work in search of the drip.

Victory Over the Sun was a collaborative effort by three avant-garde figures, all friends—the composer Matiushin, the poet Kruchenykh and Malevich himself. It was given only two performances, at Luna Park in St. Petersburg. There were two acts. In Act I, the sun is captured and locked up in a concrete box. In Act II, the Strong Men of the Future produce a new social order, no longer dependent on the primitive source of light that had been worshiped for centuries. Music, words and of course the sets and costumes were radical and cutting-edge: The music was dissonant, the lyrics were basic sounds in an experimental discourse called Zaum. Only fragments of the music and language survive, but Malevich's

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sketches for the costumes exist (you can see them on the Internet), and there are, as well, his set designs. The set that he later singled out as *Black Square*'s first appearance in his work is, according to the Guggenheim catalogue, for Act II, Scene 5. Indeed, it shows a square, divided by a diagonal into two areas, one black, the other light.

The truth is that the drawing in question has the look of something seen through a square opening in some sort of optical instrument, like a segment of the sun against a dark sky. It really looks like a picture.

Here is a better way to look at the question. In one of Malevich's studies for the opera's décor, there is a black square and a number of black rectangles—a large vertical one, and then two sets of three black rectangles at various angles to one another on either side of it. But in the same drawing there are a number of other components—some large letters, some numerals, a foot, a hand holding what looks like a bomb, a cigarette with smoke—and a number of mere marks—circles, waves, hooks, indications of the edges of overlapping planes. It is an example of an "alogical" or "transrational" drawing, a drawing whose various components (some abstract, others representational) don't cohere as a composition. The alogical drawings have something of the disorder of dreams, as Freud attempted to characterize them when he suggested that we approach them like rebus puzzles—concatenations of pictures that seem to have no rational connection with one another.

Now imagine laying a piece of transparent paper over Malevich's drawing and simply tracing the black geometrical components, disregarding all the rest. The result will look like a Suprematist drawing of 1915, consisting of a number of free-floating rectangles together with a square. It is as though Malevich's drawing had a Suprematist drawing inscribed within itself. But this would have been invisible until Suprematism was invented two years later. Suprematism consists in getting rid of all the objects other than the geometrical ones. When that has been done, one is left with a nonobjectivist work, and Suprematism is virtually synonymous with what came to be called Non-Objective art.

The term was first used by Rodchenko in connection with his *Black on Black Painting* (1918), but Malevich made the concept his own, and published a book, *The Non-Objective World*, in 1927. It is worth mentioning that the Guggenheim Museum was originally called the Museum of Non-Objective Painting when it was located on East 54th Street in Manhattan, and one really felt as if one were entering a nonobjective world when one visited it. Most of the paintings consisted of shapes floating in empty space, many of them by Rudolph Bauer, the lover of the director, the Baroness Hilla Rebay, who used to sit at the reception desk, eagerly discussing the philosophy of nonobjectivity with anyone interested. There were a lot of Kandinskys and perhaps some Mirós and Mondrians. I don't know if there was anything by Malevich, but there were some at the Museum of Modern Art, including the famous *White on White*. It was a great place to take someone one felt moony about, and hold hands on the round gray velvet settees.

Very little of Malevich's Cubo-Futurist work of 1914, with which the Guggenheim show begins, or the alogical drawings and paintings of the following year, is especially rewarding unless you think of Suprematism as struggling to emerge from the early avant-garde clutter. But when one enters the gallery of 1915 masterpieces, there is a sense of liberation that must, one is certain, recapture Malevich's own feeling when he broke free and entered what he regarded as unoccupied territory. The paintings convey a feeling of utter glee. One feels as if one were witnessing the beginning a new era, where the history of art has been left behind forever. The Russian avant-garde was obsessed with the idea of the fourth dimension, which its members read about in the mystical writings of Pyotr Demianovich Ouspensky. The fourth dimension was not an extra parameter in some dry equations but rather a living reality that one could hope to enter, like a new world. Ouspensky, a Theosophist, believed that artists were uniquely capable of making the fourth dimension vivid for individuals who are otherwise locked in their three-dimensional perception of the world. That is what the great Suprematist paintings convey—the optimism and generosity that defined the art of the Russian avant-garde at the dawn of Modernism, when it saw its mission as bringing art into life, and contributing, through art, to the creation of a new social reality, a vision initially embraced by the Russian Revolution before the perversions of Stalinism.

The smooth geometries and whitish spaces of Suprematist painting, using brilliant colors and jaunty compositions, were a vocabulary of hope and idealism. They could symbolize all the bright modernities for which the art stood—syncopated rhythms; the fourth dimension as a field of infinite explorations; the radical re-

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design of contemporary clothing, housing and cities—and above all, they could express speed and flight. "I have torn through the blue lampshade of color limitations," Malevich wrote in 1919, "and come into the white. After me, comrade aviators sail into the chasm—I have set up the semaphores of Suprematism!"

All the Suprematist compositions lift the spirit. Let's just consider *Airplane Flying*. It is, of course, not a picture, so don't bother to look for the airplane. What it captures, rather, is the feeling of flight. The flight begins at the bottom-right corner, with a tilted black square. Along the diagonal that its angle defines are two black rectangles, one larger than the other, with two thin whiz lines on either side, marked by thin black rectangles. At the upper edge of the largest black rectangle, direction changes—we get a flight of yellow rectangles, heading for the upper-right corner, crossing a long, nearly horizontal thin red rectangle as it goes. "My new painting does not belong to the earth exclusively," Malevich said in 1916. "The earth has been abandoned like a house eaten up with worms. And in fact in man and his consciousness there lies the aspiration toward space, the inclination to 'reject the earthly globe.'"

This is how the future used to look. Then came the Depression, Stalinism, fascism, the two world wars, the cold war. The poor mangled *Black Square* shows how that once-bright future looks now. It is like the ashes of hope, and in its way a memorial to Malevich himself, as the future collapsed around him. He died a poor man, disgraced and erased from the history of art according to the Soviet Union. ■

FILMS

The Age of Innocence

STUART KLAWANS

SEABISCUIT • DIRTY PRETTY THINGS • THE MAGDALENE SISTERS • SEPTEMBER 11

If you've seen *Pleasantville*—the story of teenagers who are magically transported from 1990s reality into 1950s television—you know that its writer-director, Gary Ross, has a sly respect for nostalgia, especially when it's felt for a past you didn't live. *Pleasantville*'s protagonists, the not-yet-famous Tobey Maguire and Reese Witherspoon, inhabited their vision of a pristine world and then slowly learned to distance themselves from it. The more disillusioned they became, the less rancor they felt about the present day—which may help to explain the film's middling box-office career. Audiences today don't have much feeling for unembittered irony.

Ross's new film, his first since *Pleasantville*, draws on the same gentle mode; and yet this picture will surely bring him great rewards. The movie is *Seabiscuit*: a success story in the self-consciously American vein, based on a bestselling book by Laura Hillenbrand about a great race horse of the 1930s and the troubled people who drew together around him. On the handsome face of it, this is a presold property, and not just because it features the now-stellar Maguire. *Seabiscuit* is literally and insistently about beating the odds, coming from behind, running free.

Almost inevitably, the movie begins and ends with evocations of America's ultimate symbol of opportunity, the open road. Not so inevitably, these images are melancholy.

To start, Ross shows you period photographs of the Model T Ford—an instrument of mobility, yes, but one that helped doom America's horse culture. To conclude, Ross gives you a winner's-eye view of a race track, with nothing ahead but room to move. This image, too, is tricky, when you recall that the oval doesn't lead anywhere, and that at this point the horse and jockey are finishing their careers. So, quietly, *Seabiscuit* demonstrates that its story plays out between two moments of loss: the withering away of rural, artisanal America, and the end of the New Deal era and its ethos of the common man. Nostalgia is surfeited; nostalgia is undone. Little wonder, in these shifty circumstances, that Seabiscuit's owner, San Francisco auto dealer Charlie Howard, should be a great touter of America's unlimited future, yet empty his garage of cars to make room for a horse.

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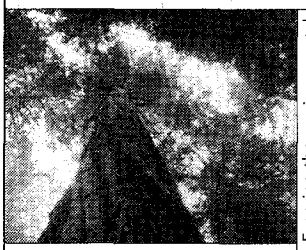

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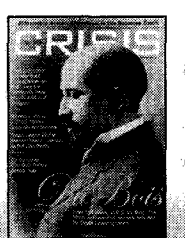

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like that other auto salesman, Tucker—who nevertheless conveys a deep steadiness. Although he devotes half the movie to revving people up, Howard spends the other half calming them. This makes him something like nature's gentleman Tom Smith (Chris Cooper), the hobo cowboy who becomes Seabiscuit's trainer, except that Smith is all hands and Howard all mouth, Smith a soother of horses and Howard of humans.

The third principal two-legged character, jockey Red Pollard, is the most damaged of these people, the one who most needs calming; and so he is the one presented through Maguire's uneasy intelligence. No matter what line of dialogue he delivers, in whichever film, Maguire seems to hold back some other remark, which is damn well going to remain his secret. But he doesn't need words to hint at an inner life. When he edges into a stall in this movie and sees Seabiscuit for the first time, Maguire does nothing but widen his eyes slightly, and you know that some new life has begun in him.

Two more points of comparison between *Seabiscuit* and *Pleasantville*: In both movies, Ross has his characters discover that perfection isn't what it's cracked up to be, and in both he makes the film mimic a genre of television. In *Seabiscuit*, that genre is the historical documentary—and to make sure the imitation is faithful, Ross's pans and zooms across old photographs are accompanied by a narration by David McCullough, voice of *The American Experience*.

This means the nation's moviegoers are lining up for a two-hour lesson in social history, whose moral is that Washington should lend a hand to the little guy. Bring back the New Deal! Can Gary Ross revive old-style liberalism, with the help of Tobey Maguire and a horse? Probably not—but he can work a sweetly elegiac, sadly hopeful tone into this movie, even though it predictably, and astonishingly, flies along as if on a jockey's shoulders.

When Red Pollard takes his first exhilarating gallop on Seabiscuit, the landscape is already autumnal.

One of contemporary cinema's great collaborators, Stephen Frears, was among the first directors to put multihued, postcolonial England on the screen, working with writer Hanif Kureishi on *My Beautiful Laundrette* and *Sammy and Rosie Get Laid*. Now Frears is back with a new movie, *Dirty Pretty Things*, set in a London where you almost never see a white Englishman. This time his writer is the ingenious Steven Knight, to whom Frears has responded with nervous, obsessive energy.

Scarcely has the movie begun than our hero, Okwe (Chiwetel Ejiofor), is being summoned into a back room, where he is pushed to his knees before his boss's crotch. The occasion, it turns out, is a medical exam. Although Okwe is a doctor back in Nigeria, he's a cab driver by day in London and a hotel desk clerk by night. He's also an undocumented immigrant—like Senay (Audrey Tautou), a Turkish-born housekeeper at the same hotel, who rents him her sofa (on which he can't sleep) and struggles almost angrily not to flirt with him.

If these two only had papers, then maybe they'd find time for at least a one-night stand. But they're in a city of anonymity, cops, overwork, penury, back-room encounters that really *are* about sex and hotel rooms that sometimes have a human heart stuffed down the toilet. In other words, *Dirty Pretty Things* is a work of realist cinema, made into a thriller by connecting the factual dots with a few taut narrative threads.

Tautou, temporarily freed from being winsome, is utterly convincing and effective as Senay; and Ejiofor (a native Londoner) is even better as Okwe, a man who has to work doubly hard to remain decent simply because he's vibrating with fatigue. The supporting cast is uniformly excellent; the plot, artificial enough to give the bad guy his comeuppance but sufficiently responsible to avoid a purely happy ending.

For my money, *Dirty Pretty Things* is the best movie out there today.

Peter Mullan started in show business as an actor, working notably with Ken Loach, whose no-frills style seems to have carried over into Mullan's impressive new film as a writer-director, *The Magdalene Sisters*. The story, I'm sorry to say, is mostly true. It follows the miserable lives of three young Irish women—Margaret (Anne-Marie Duff), Bernadette (Nora-Jane Noone) and Rose (Dorothy Duffy)—who were imprisoned and enslaved in a Catholic asylum for fallen women. This happened in County Dublin in the 1960s—the day before yesterday. The women's sins? One had been raped, one had flirted with boys and one, who had borne a child out of wedlock, wanted to keep her baby.

Mullan has seen to it that his actors never give in to a single moment of self-regard—which is what you'd expect of him. The surprise is his narrative punch. He spares you nothing, omitting neither the pools of blood gathered on the eyelids of a recently punished inmate nor the long seconds required to drag a desperate woman down a hall. The most devastating detail, though, may be the silent presence of women in their

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50s and 60s. Margaret, Bernadette and Rose look around the Magdalene Asylum and realize—as do you—that they may never come out again.

The anthology film *September 11*, organized by Alain Brigand, is a set of reflections on the World Trade Center attack, realized independently by eleven directors—a roster that's something like a pickup football team whose players have neither a quarterback nor an opponent and so charge off in eleven directions.

Or are there only three? What's most interesting about *September 11* is the evidence it offers that filmmakers have just a few options for dealing with terrible events.

Number one: Treat the subject as something too large to show. This Unrepresentability Trope is taken up by at least four of the directors, of whom the strongest are Alejandro González Iñárittu and Samira Makhmalbaf. González Iñárritu's deeply disturbing piece is a sound-collage of the attack, played against a screen that remains black except for flashes of actualities footage. Makhmalbaf's contribution to the anthology is an affecting fable about an Afghan schoolteacher in rural Iran, struggling to put the event into images that her pupils can understand.

This brings us to the verge of a second approach: the Local Perspective Trope. In Amos Gitai's nervy and hilarious film, an insanely pushy TV reporter in Tel Aviv tries to cover a suicide bombing, never understanding why no one is watching her. In a staged documentary based on a real incident, Mira Nair looks at the attack through the eyes of a grieving Muslim woman in New York. And in an outrageous drama that is one of the anthology's best films, Shohei Imamura goes back to the craziness of 1945 Japan, the better to think clearly about 2001 America.

When such local concerns completely eclipse the World Trade Center attack, you get The Trope of the Changed Topic. Ken Loach handles this approach well, in a piece that offers a letter of condolence to the families and friends of the Twin Towers victims. The letter's author—another kind of mourner—is the Chilean expatriate Vladimir Vega, who recalls for his New York counterparts his experiences of September 11, 1973. Loach's editing is brilliant—he finds startling equivalents to the WTC attack in the bombing of the Moneda Palace—and his human sympathy runs deep. This is more than I can say for Youssef Chahine, who devotes his film to expressing solidarity with Palestinian suicide bombers, mourning any American soldiers who happened to be hunky and lauding his own importance.

The best contributions to *September 11* get you to wonder again at the power of the event. The worst make you, too, want to change the topic.

In the Family: Director John Scagliotti, long a member of the Vermont branch of *The Nation*'s clan, and producers Janet Baus and Dan Hunt have just released a far-ranging new sixty-minute video, *Dangerous Living: Coming Out in the Developing World*. Taking as its frame story the arrest in 2001 of fifty-two men in Cairo on charges of "debauchery," *Dangerous Living* explores the recent flourishing of a gay and lesbian culture in such places as Thailand, Malaysia, Honduras, Namibia and Pakistan, and the subsequent crackdown by civil and religious authorities. After a recent premiere at the San Francisco International Lesbian & Gay Film Festival, the very smart and thoughtful *Dangerous Living* is now off on a national tour. For information: www.afterstonewall.com. ■

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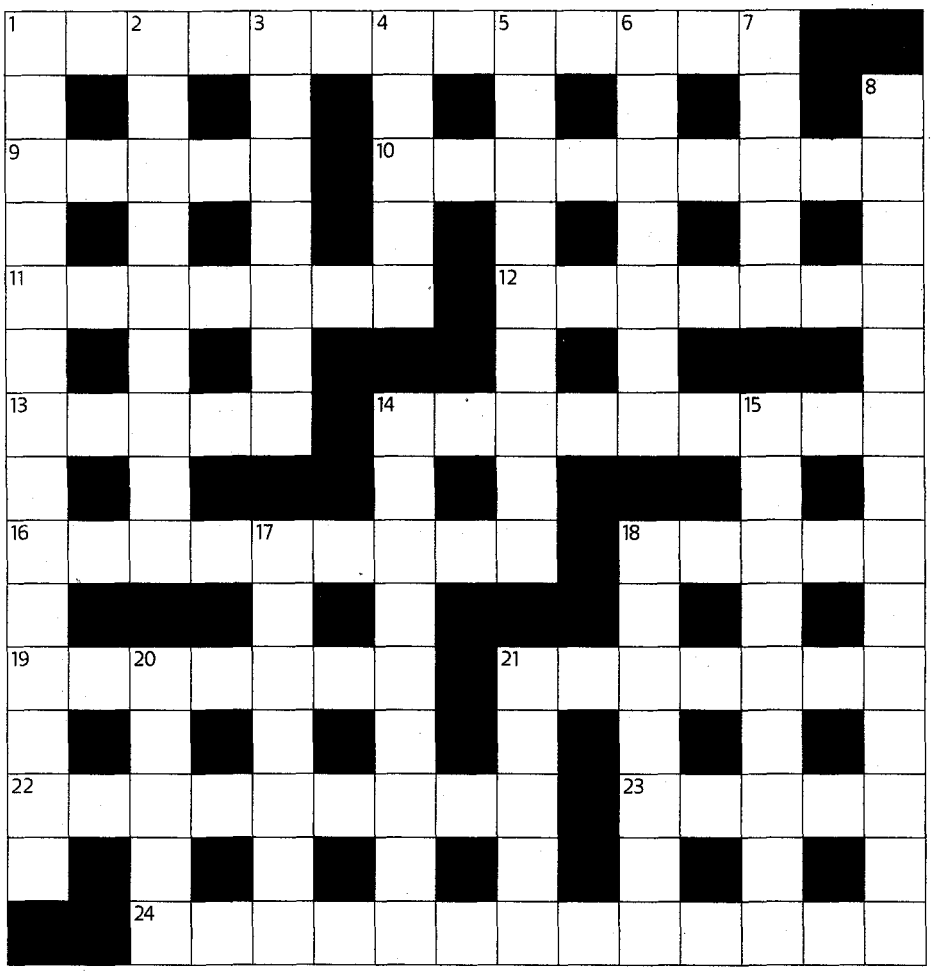

ACROSS

1 Something you pull to call a halt goes in favor of Portland, for example, but this might back you up. (13)

9 Another name for Alice, perhaps. (5)

10 A broken rib to me's not much trouble, but it's often associated with fire. (9)

11 Like a hill in 'Frisco, in case you consider it the highest ranking. (7)

12 We steam out this way, having a life jacket. (3,4)

13 Undulating miasma, without a final cause of religious leaders. (5)

14 Everett in trouble about an adjective applied to keepers? (9)

16 Belonging to a thing by its very nature. (9)

18 What the baby might need before the French refer to it as "The Book" perhaps. (5)

19 One who stumbles going back and forth to work each day? (7)

21 Possibly a soaring description of the lady of the house in Rome. (7)

22 It might be a birthing discussion that carries someone away. (9)

23 Former British politician who always had the French slipper on. (5)

24 Knowingly referred to in domestic disputes as a third party. (3,5,5)

DOWN

1 Make up an excuse for it? (14)

2 The statement of one who doesn't work and is proud of it? (4,5)

3 The ones of the Constitution didn't necessarily plan an underhand deal, but were just bad farmers. (7)

4 One that works automatically is the source of things about the head of 18. (5)

5 Hard to figure out, like a German cipher machine. (9)

6 The wrong step shows one in Germany to be a British chiseler, of sorts. (7)

7 Although it might seem overt, it's usually hidden. (5)

8 Some years ago the hip people won over McCarthy, perhaps, with something to be doled out. (4,10)

14 The string of cars has everything else around it, showing some self-control. (9)

15 Flowering in the protagonist of *Ulysses*, running around the ship. (2,7)

17 Reaching a point where nothing seems possible, I proclaim that I am out of date. (7)

18 American writer-diplomat called on the carpet, putting out the sort of bilge that has nothing to get Washington started. (7)

20 Where to find one of the dishes is not the whole picture. (5)

21 Superficially burn something, and confess there's a point to it. (5)

PUZZLED? No more cross words. If you don't see why "Lures" are "Ground Rules" send for those of Mr. Lewis to: Puzzled, The Nation, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003, or access our website at www.thenation.com/about/crossword.mhtml.

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S	T	R	I	K	E	S	U	P	A		T	U	N	E
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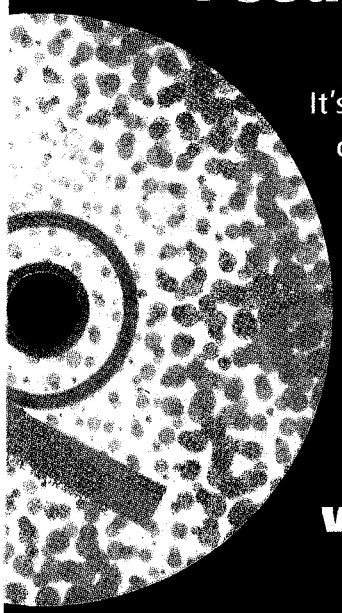

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